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Southern Lady
53 COZY WINTER IDEAS
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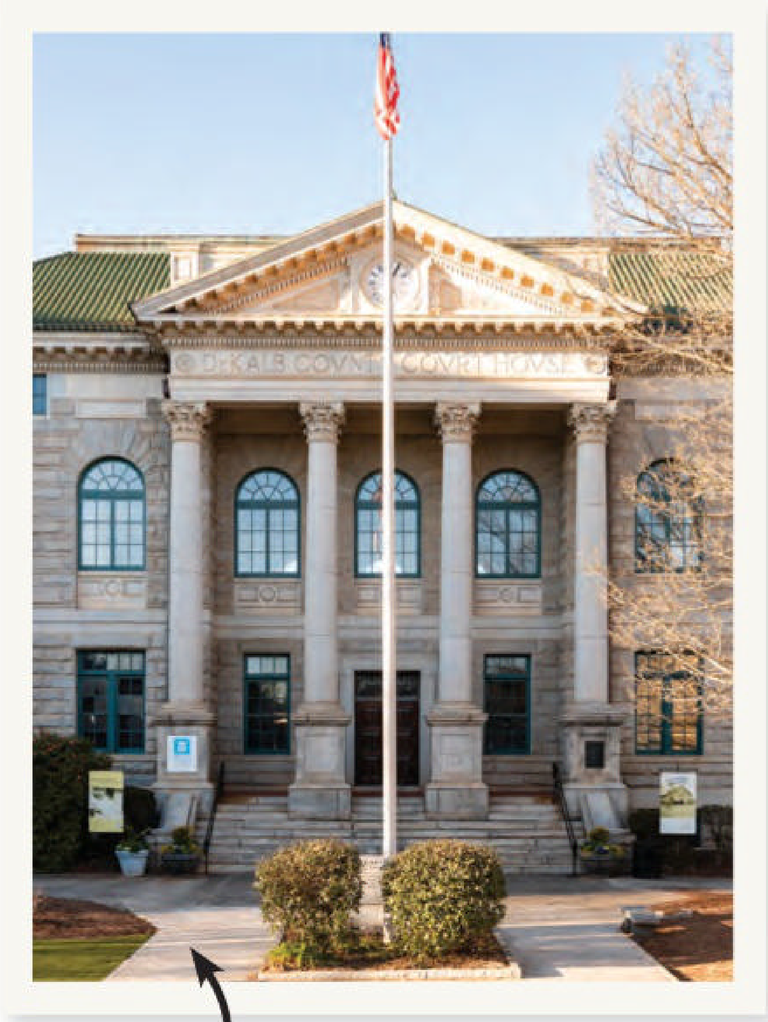

Sweet Memories!

The Historic DeKalb Courthouse sits right at the heart of downtown Decatur. This lovely old building has always been special to me—my husband and I had our wedding reception in the upper-level ballroom.

NEW YEAR ADVENTURES

Welcome, 2023! If you're like me, one of the best parts of turning the calendar page is dreaming of all the travel possibilities throughout the months to come—weekend getaways as well as longer escapes. We've always delighted in sharing the best of the South's marquee cities and hidden gems, and this issue spans both. Our travel features this year will focus on Southern college towns, kicking off with a visit to College Station, Texas (page 69). While it's mainly known as the home of the Texas A&M Aggies—and the university is the heartbeat of local life—there's so much more to draw visitors in, not least the laid-back vibe for which the Lone Star State is known.

On page 95, we take you to one of Atlanta's most charming suburbs: Decatur, just a stone's throw east of downtown. I grew up nearby and watched the town come into its own after the 1996 Summer Olympics, blossoming into a blend of top-notch restaurants, well-curated boutiques, and newly restored bungalows in the shade of magnificent old trees. By the time I moved there right after graduating from college, it was (and still is) a bona fide hot spot, vibrant with creative energy and a neighborhood feel. Plus, you can walk everywhere—a rarity in metro Atlanta!

Finally, as long as *Southern Lady* has graced newsstands and mailboxes, readers have looked forward to anecdotes and words of wisdom from founder Phyllis Hoffman DePiano in her welcome letter at the start of each issue. We've changed things up a little to let Phyllis expand her musings in our Afterthoughts column on page 113. For this first installment, she shares reminiscences about her grandmother's vintage sewing machine and gives us a poignant perspective for the year ahead. Enjoy!

Lisa Frederick

Lisa Frederick
EDITOR

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WHAT INSPIRES YOU? WE'D LOVE TO SEE—TAG US IN YOUR PHOTOS!

Get a glimpse of the beautiful images our social media friends have shared with us, capturing their own inspiration from the pages of *Southern Lady*. Top row: A bouquet of pretty posies mimics a painterly cup and saucer to cast a delightful scene in @diga_linda's home. Hearty soup served as the first course at @morethanatable's dinner party comforts guests coming in from the cold weather. Bright Sunday mornings for @rosemarythymeblogspotcom are accompanied by hot pancakes, succulent strawberries, a cup of tea, and a little reminiscing. Middle row: A welcoming vignette greets @southerngiltvintage with a manicured topiary and favorite vintage culinary finds. Wishing for warmth, @palomas_table draws inspiration for her setting from the colors and blooms of the season ahead. Bottom row: A sweet story time awaits at @suburbancrunchygirl's table, adorned with rosy details. To top off a winter supper, @luckylady.vintage wows her crowd with a festive cake and fresh florals. With a vase of lovely cherry blossoms and heart-shaped bowls, @jenniferjrossdesigns makes Valentine's Day all the more romantic.

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Antique shops and stylish boutiques. Worldwide cuisine and Gulf-to-table fare. Championship golf courses and a thriving arts scene. The wide variety ensures that every day offers a completely new experience.

UNEXPECTED SURPRISES

Head north of the Bay to discover Freeport, DeFuniak Springs and Paxton – equally steeped in rich history and pristine natural beauty.

Surrounding Lake DeFuniak, Circle Drive was once home to the vibrant local Chautauqua Assembly. Visitors can tour the classic architecture of nearly 200 homes and buildings, about 40 of which are noted in the National Register of Historic Places.

Morrison Springs is a 161-acre park highlighted by a crystal-clear, spring-fed pool 250 feet in diameter. Dive enthusiasts flock here to explore the deep underwater cavities, but it is equally attractive to casual swimmers and eco-tourists as well.

Nestled within the expansive Nokuse Plantation preserve, the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is a great home base for exploring the longleaf pine ecosystem. This hidden gem welcomes budding naturalists of all ages to learn more about the power of biodiversity.

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SOUTHERN CANDYMAKERS
FRENCH QUARTER

Heavenly Delights

New Orleans' renowned pralines may evoke a wonderful memory or create a new one for those looking for a little midwinter sweetness.

BY **Marie Baxley** | STYLING BY **Maghan Armstrong** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **John O'Hagan**

SOUTHERN CANDYMAKERS

A huge copper cauldron of gooey melted sugar roils and boils at Southern Candymakers, creating the beloved confection that shares the city's French heritage and culinary distinctiveness: the praline. Head candymaker Sue Scalf sometimes has to hire seasonal extra helpers in the busy kitchens, where a luscious lava of sugar, cream, butter, and pecan halves is scooped onto marble slabs—all while visitors watch in mouthwatering anticipation.

"We start with all fresh ingredients; we don't use any preservatives in the candy. It's all handmade in batches daily," says Lisa Balderas, vice president of marketing and operations at the award-winning enterprise, based in the French Quarter. Most of the year, small pots capable of handling one or two batches at a time are enough to meet demand. But for larger orders and holidays, they fire up a giant copper kettle that turns out about 10 batches at once.

Many food historians agree the Creole sweet and its name (which locals pronounce prah-leen) dates back to a 17th-century almond concoction made for French diplomat César, duc de Choiseul, comte du Plessis-Praslin by his chef, Clement Lassagne. It is believed the Praslin, now praline, gained footing in New Orleans in the 1700s when the Ursuline nuns brought in young French women to marry settlers and become upstanding members in society. The girls were educated in the art of praline making, but in Louisiana, pecans were more readily available and soon replaced almonds.

"It's definitely a regional nut," Lisa says, noting they often get questions from tourists about its proper pronunciation, too. "It's peh-cahn, not pee-can."

Southern Candymakers, founded in 1992, is the retirement pastime of a pair of Tulane University professors, Dana and Robert Tompkins. "They are foodies. They love to eat, entertain, and they love to gather. They started doing recipes and making candy, and it just seemed like the right thing for them to do," says Lisa.

Since the beginning, the Original Creamy Praline has steadfastly remained the top seller, followed by chocolate. "It tastes like fudge, very rich and so decadent," says Lisa. Other flavors on the menu are rum, peanut butter, coconut, and another Louisiana staple, sweet potato. The latest flavor to gain year-round status is lemon, which was intended as a seasonal offering a few years ago to celebrate National Praline Day (June 24). "As soon as the month of June was over, we announced that we were going back to our regular flavors, and we had such noise about that. Everybody was emailing us, calling us, coming into the store," says Lisa. Now a fixture, the citrusy bonbons get a drizzle of white chocolate in the winter months.

In addition to pralines, the company sells other confections like brittle, chocolate-caramel tortues (French for turtles), fudge, toffee, and more, all listed in an annual catalog. The two French Quarter locations will be bolstered this year by a new warehouse and store on the city's West Bank, allowing even more candymakers to join the team.

The Tompkins, whose son Chuck Williams serves as general manager, never envisioned they would have such a dedicated fan base, including return customers who seek a memory of a special trip to the Crescent City. One enthusiastic sugar lover even asked and was granted permission to propose to his partner in the shop.

Lisa, who has worked for Southern Candymakers nearly two decades, credits in part the staff's friendliness for the loyal audience and the Tompkins for creating a wonderful atmosphere on the job. "They really do make you feel like you are part of their family," she says.

For info, visit southerncandymakers.com.

ART LIFE
INSPIRED BY NATURE

Hand-shirred lampshades crafted with artisan ikat fabrics have become the bread and butter of Mollie Nitzken's home décor company Slightly East. Like the colorful shades, each throw pillow and other distinctive accessories in her growing collection showcase the remarkable craftsmanship of contemporary, vintage, and antique textiles from Uzbekistan and Turkey.

East Meets West

Adventures abroad and a heap of unexpected sales lead to a business endeavor that honors the age-old artistry of woven goods.

BY **Ashley Shaw** | STYLING BY **Donna Nichols** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Kyle Carpenter**

Surrounded by 300 handcrafted pillows in her tiny Atlanta apartment nearly a decade ago, Mollie Nitzken sensed the seed for home décor enterprise Slightly East taking root. "They sold almost all in one year. Then, people started calling to see if the fabric was available," says Mollie, who has been smitten with fine textiles since her first trip to Turkey as a teenager.

Tissue box covers fashioned from hand-dyed ikat silk and exquisite shirred lampshades made by Indian artisans have become signature products in Mollie's growing Slightly East line. Pillows of various shapes and sizes, all sewn in Atlanta, showcase the kaleidoscopic range of fabrics she has been sourcing since those early days of peddling cushions to interior designers—a venture that began with a phone call.

At the time, Mollie worked for a prominent textile producer and had connected with a wide network of decorating professionals. A pal of hers in Turkey represented a company that didn't want to ship hundreds of throw pillows back from Manhattan after a major design show. "My friend called

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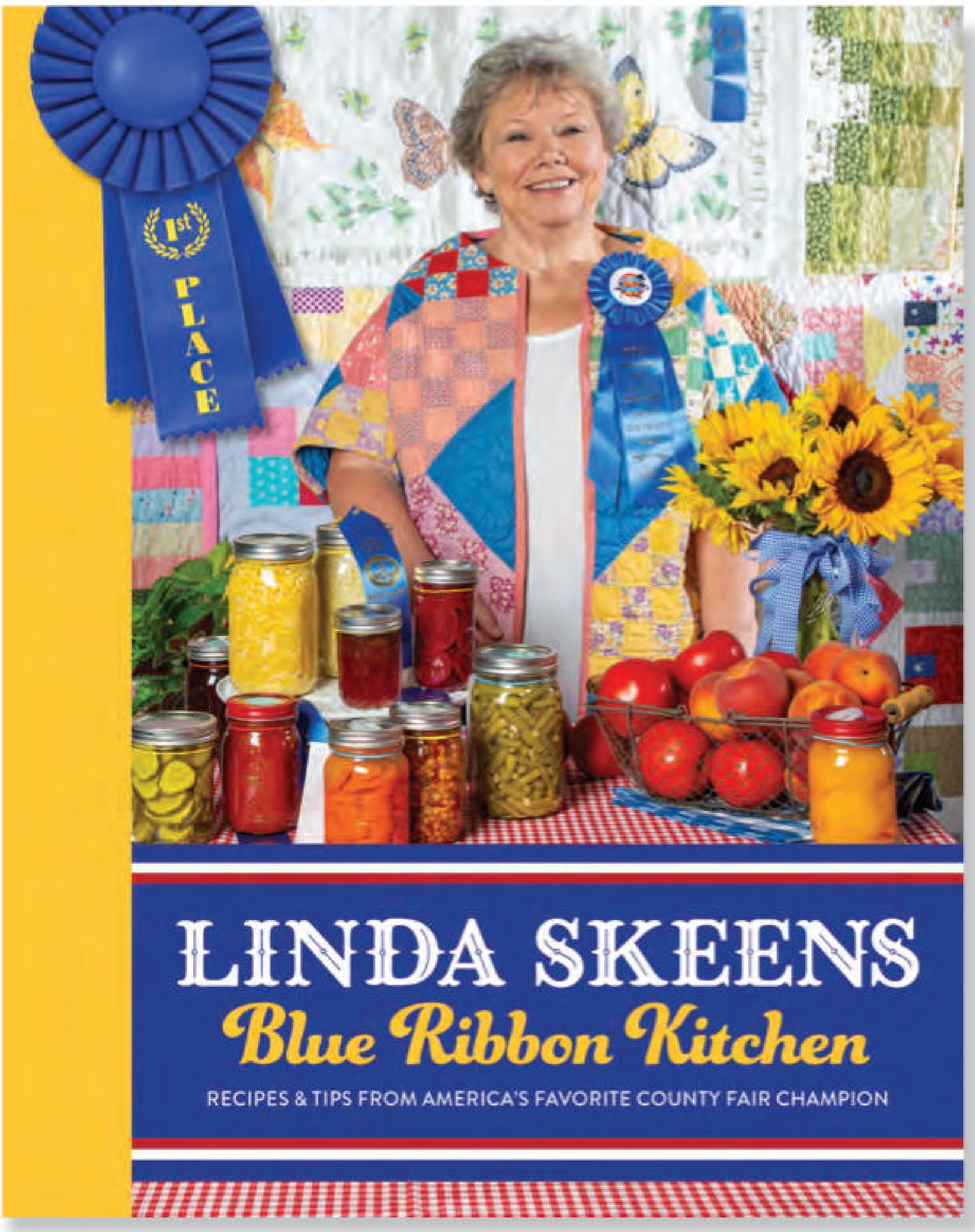
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and asked, 'Can you sell them?'" says Mollie, who got permission from her boss to tackle the challenge. "I flew up to New York, vacuum-sealed them, and shipped them to my apartment to photograph."

With each sale, Mollie felt the pull of entrepreneurship. Clients were eager to order the rare and artful fabrics used on the Turkish pillows for other projects. Mollie connected with weavers in Uzbekistan and manufacturers in Central Asia who specialize in reproducing antique textiles, shifting her focus to cut yardage to meet demand. "It's been a journey of figuring out what sells best," Mollie says.

Her top priority upon launching Slightly East in 2016 was importing textiles for designers. Before long, she began dabbling in product and fabric design herself. "I have a ton of books of old Ottoman textiles, old Uzbek textiles. Looking through those and looking at motifs from the past is where I get inspiration," says Mollie, whose high school internship at a rug boutique in Louisville, Kentucky, sparked her passion for fine fabrics. She worked at the store part-time while studying studio art at Centre College, and every summer, she accompanied her boss on buying excursions to Turkey for the shop. "It was such an amazing experience for how young I was," she says.

When she visited Uzbekistan as an adult, Mollie's appreciation for woven goods reached a new peak. She swooned over the fanciful embroidery, rich hues, and patterns of materials made according to centuries-old techniques. "They are bringing beauty and color to their lives through everything they wear and produce," says Mollie, who hopes the decorative pieces from Slightly East impart similar joy.

Plans for 2023 call for new products, including acrylic drink trays and table lamps made from vintage candlesticks, and expanding the selection of lampshades and pillows made from luxurious ikat velvet. Mollie takes cues from industry trends and special requests from customers, but the lifeblood of her collection remains Asian artisans. "I think it's so important to support these cultural traditions," she says. "To support craftspeople around the world, so they can keep that part of their culture; [that] is the main reason I love handicrafts."

For information, visit slightlyeast.com.

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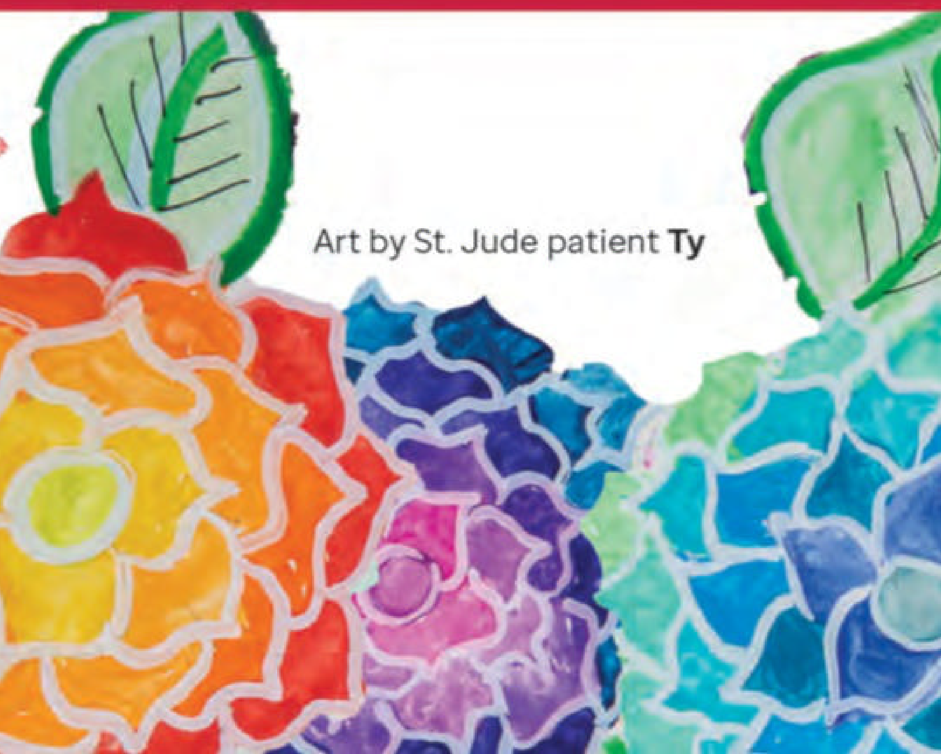

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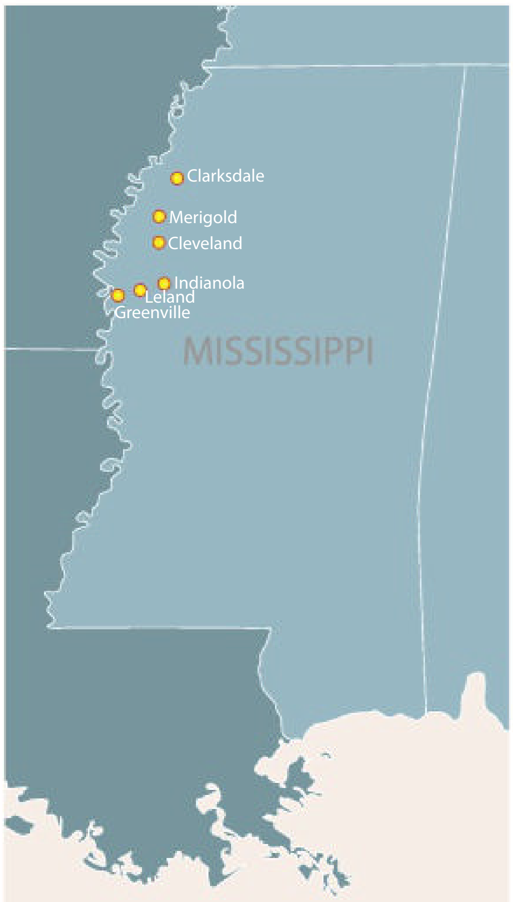
Cleveland's
Cotton Row District



The Mississippi Delta is an alluvial floodplain that makes up much of the state's northwest corner, and the region's contributions to American music and culture are innumerable.

Darling Downtowns Making up most of the western part of the Magnolia State, the Mississippi Delta was originally made famous for its cotton, but over time, it's become much more renowned for its musical contributions. It was on this floodplain that the blues were born and, along with it, some of its most storied practitioners, including Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and John Lee Hooker.

Meandering south from Tunica, travelers will find the eclectic town of **Clarksdale**. Beyond the Delta Blues Museum and the adjacent Ground Zero Blues Club, visitors will enjoy a wide variety of locally owned shops, boutique hotels like the Travelers Hotel and the Hooker Hotel, and local restaurants.

Down the road in **Cleveland**, folks will find the new and remarkable GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi, which is packed with star-studded memorabilia and interactive exhibits for the whole family. A few minutes away, the walkable Cotton Row district completes the experience with an enviable collection of boutiques and restaurants.

Even farther south in **Greenville**, visitors can revel in the region's musical and historical roots. Complete with ancient Native American mounds, gorgeous levee views of Lake Ferguson, and a vibrant downtown scene, Greenville is an essential part of any Delta excursion.

Between Clarksdale, Cleveland, and Greenville, travelers will pass through dozens of small towns that make up the patchwork of culture in the region. **Merigold**, for instance, is home to one of the area's most famous pottery studios, while **Leland** was once home to Jim Henson of Muppet's fame, and the nearby town of **Indianola** was where blues legend B.B. King got his start.

Local Flavor Throughout the Delta, visitors will find both iconic Southern foods and some exciting local inventions. Folks who come to see the legendary crossroads in Clarksdale should linger for memorable barbecue at **Abe's Bar-B-Q**. From tender ribs and Delta-style hot tamales to overstuffed double-decker sliced pork sandwiches, Abe's is sure to satisfy. Blocks away, visitors will find incredible Italian American favorites inside **Ramon's**. The family-owned joint's most popular dishes include spaghetti and meatballs and golden-fried shrimp. Steps from the Ground Zero Blues Club, hungry visitors will find local staples and live music at **Hooker Grocer + Eatery**. Offerings range from fried and blackened catfish to Asian-inspired dishes such as Chicken Karaage (popcorn chicken with a sweet and spicy sauce). For breakfast, visit Archie Buford's **Our Grandma's House of Pancakes**. This Clarksdale native has spent years perfecting morning menu items like pancakes, waffles, and hash browns, and it shows. Over in Cleveland, Chef Cole Ellis serves up lunch, dinner, and curated pantry staples at **Delta Meat Market**. Located in the chic Cotton Row Hotel, visitors should try Southern classics like fried green tomato BLTs and comforting meatloaf. Specials often include Gulf seafood and seared steaks. A short drive from Indianola's B.B. King Museum, **The Crown** has a menu packed with traditional Southern dishes. The restaurant's mother-and-daughter team are known for their Catfish Allison and Great Grilling Chicken Salad. The pies are also sublime. The restaurant's attached gift shop features many culinary creations from sister company, Taste of Gourmet. If you're looking for a quick fix in Greenville, head to **Gino's Hamburgers & Catfish** for satisfying plates. Across town, **Doe's Eat Place** is at once a local favorite and a regionally beloved destination. Its cozy atmosphere, hand-cut steaks, and Delta-style hot tamales are must-tries for any Southern food lover.

Doe's Eat Place

Abe's Bar-B-Q

Our Grandma's House of Pancakes

Chicken Karaage from Hooker Grocer + Eatery

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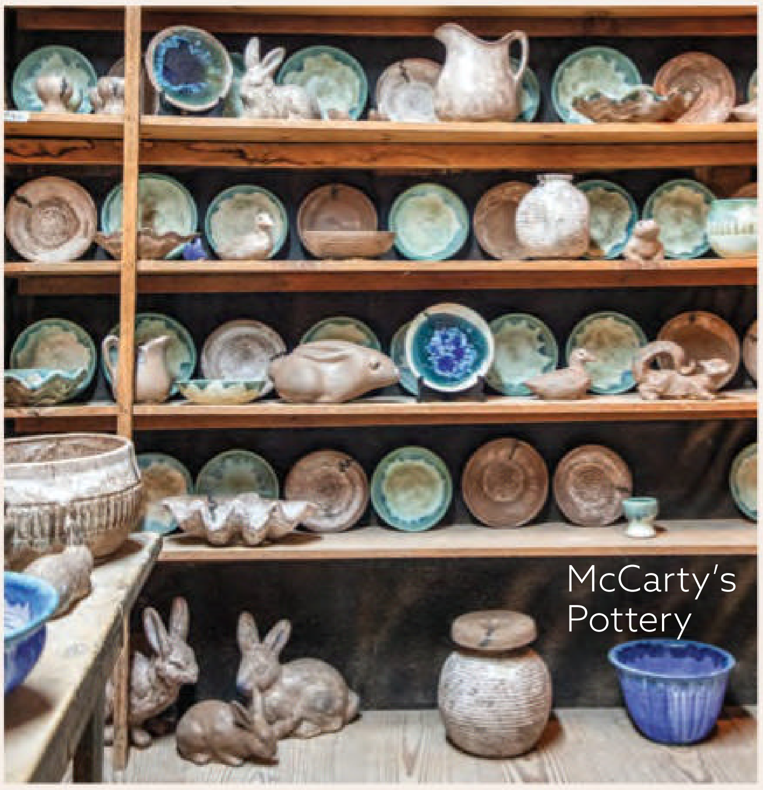
DEEP LOCAL ROOTS

Cathead Delta Blues & Folk Art

Shopper's Paradise In Downtown Clarksdale, options for an afternoon of shopping abound. **Cathead Delta Blues & Folk Art** stocks vinyl, local art, and more. Owner Roger Stolle is a nationally known expert on the Delta blues and a terrific resource for building a home music collection. Across the street, **Magpie Gift & Art** features seasonal displays with curated gifts. Between Clarksdale and Cleveland, in the unassuming town of Merigold, visitors will find one of the state's most renowned ceramics studios, **McCarty's Pottery**. The simple and elegant originals range from kitchenware to ornamental pieces, and the studio's graceful labyrinth of indoor and outdoor spaces is a delight. As visitors browse the offerings, they can often see the artisans hard at work sculpting and glazing their pieces. Plan to come on Fridays when they serve a light lunch. Meanwhile, in Cleveland, **Cotton Row** offers visitors a manicured walking trail that separates two rows of boutiques and other small local businesses. Zoe Coffee (a mission-based coffee shop with light bites), clothing shop Mod + Proper, and Neysa's Fireside Shop are just a few of the locally owned stops along the route.

Magpie
GIFT & ART



McCarty's Pottery

The Crown

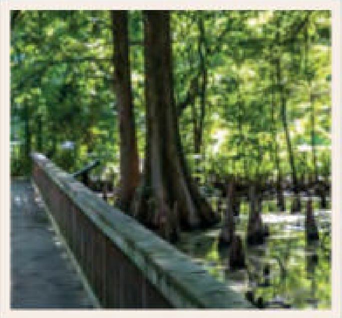
BAD APPLE
BLUES CLUB
LIVE BLUES
HAPPY FACE ON
BAD APPLE BLU
BAD APPLE BLUES CLUB

B.B. King Museum

Living Blues History A trip to the Delta without immersing oneself in the blues is hardly a trip at all. Between live music venues and fascinating museums, newbies and experts alike will have much to gain between Clarksdale, Cleveland, and Greenville. In Clarksdale, the **Delta Blues Museum** is a great start, and Sean Apple's small-group ramble through the many musical styles of Delta blues at the **Bad Apple Blues Club** is as fun as it is informative. A one-man band, Sean demonstrates the subtle differences between each style and era while playing different guitars, singing, and encouraging audience participation. **Red's Lounge** in Clarksdale epitomizes the raw and authentic live blues club experience at its nightly live shows. Many of these venues are cash-only, so make sure to be prepared, and tip generously. For a modern take on the music industry, Cleveland's **GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi** provides a beautiful glimpse behind the velvet rope with fun interactive exhibits for all ages. The museum highlights the different cultural styles of American music, displays iconic instruments and red carpet outfits, and even covers the history of dance. In nearby Indianola, blues fans will delight at the **B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center**. The property lavishly tells his story—from his beginnings in Indianola and introduction to Memphis, Tennessee, all the way through the end of his life—and how it intersected with the larger Delta community. Its large collection of ephemera and artifacts is astounding and includes some of King's guitars, cars, and even a tour bus. Visitors can pay their respects to the storied musician at his adjacent memorial.

CAN'T-MISS DESTINATIONS

Childhood Nostalgia
Birthplace of Kermit the Frog
Leland



Serene Walking Trails
Cypress Preserve
Greenville

Culinary Escapades
Viking Cooking School
Greenwood

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Quapaw Canoe Company
Clarksdale

Historic Vistas
Winterville Mounds
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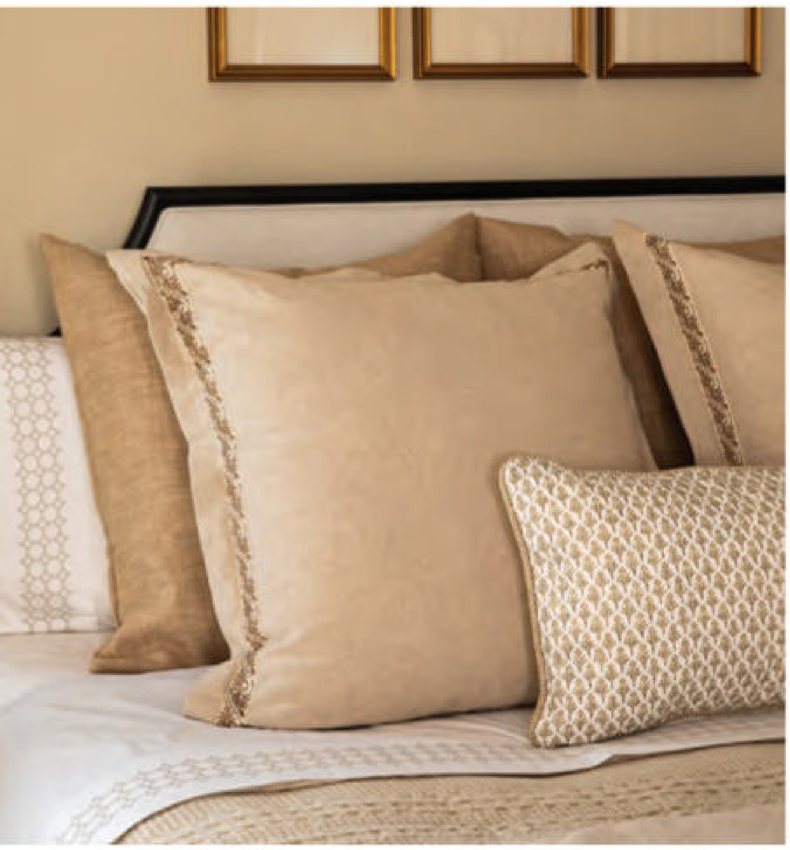
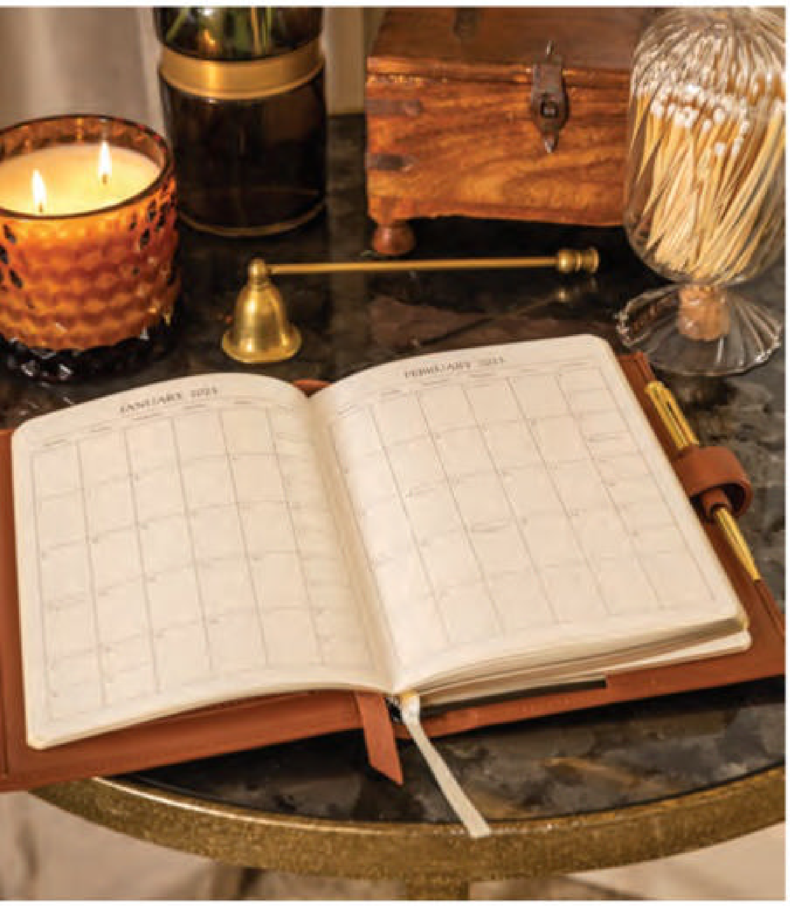
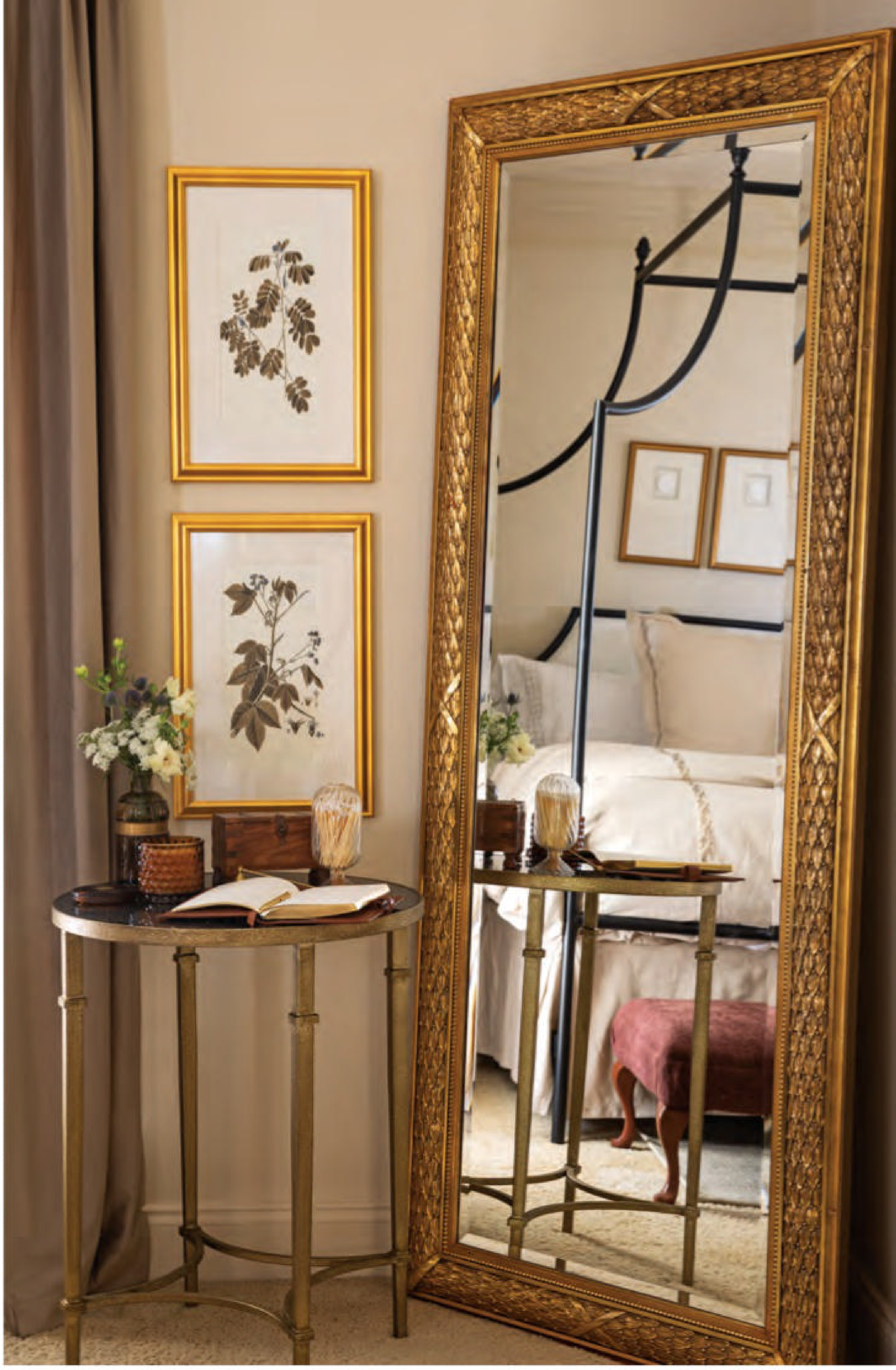




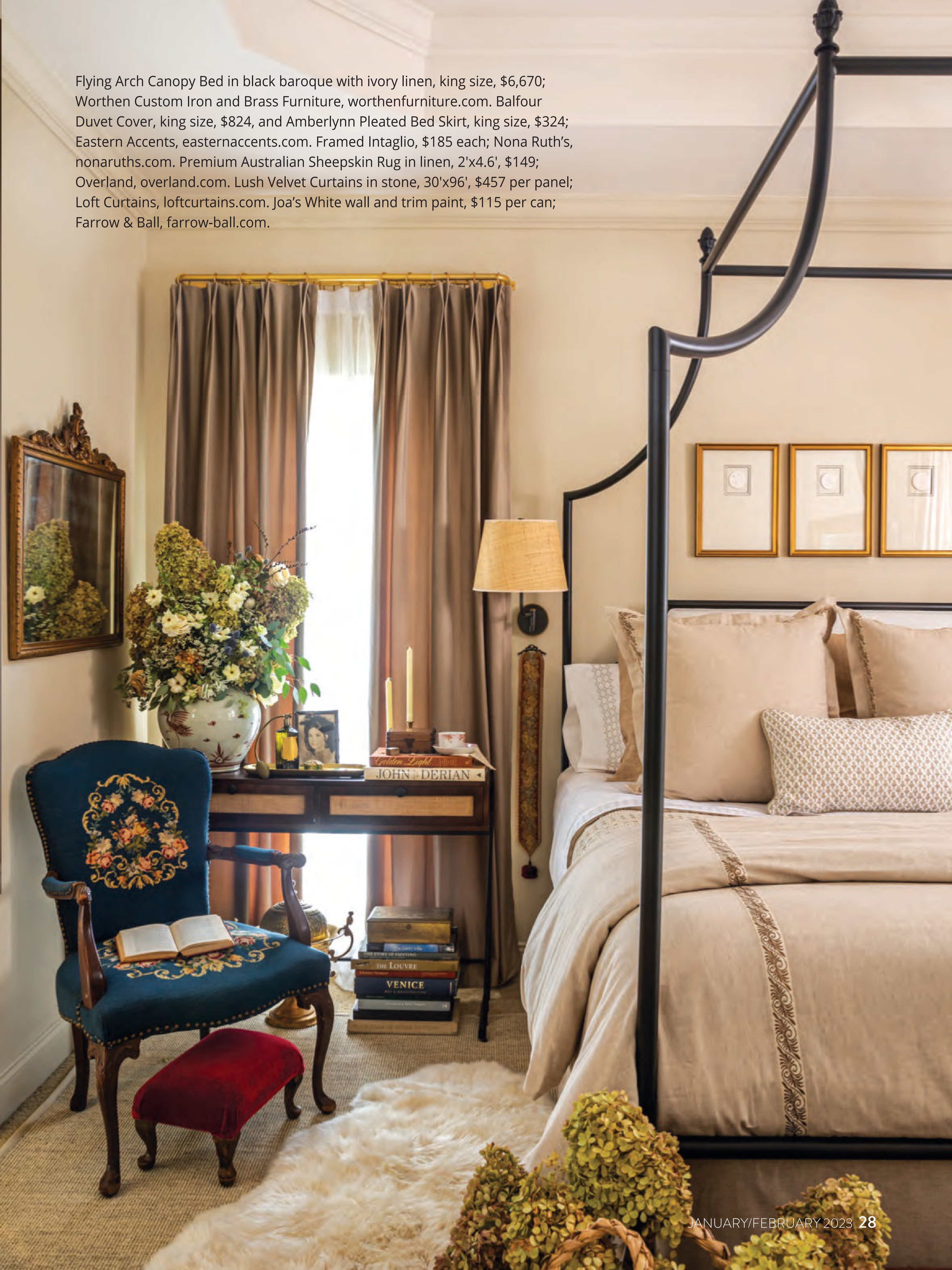


Restful Haven

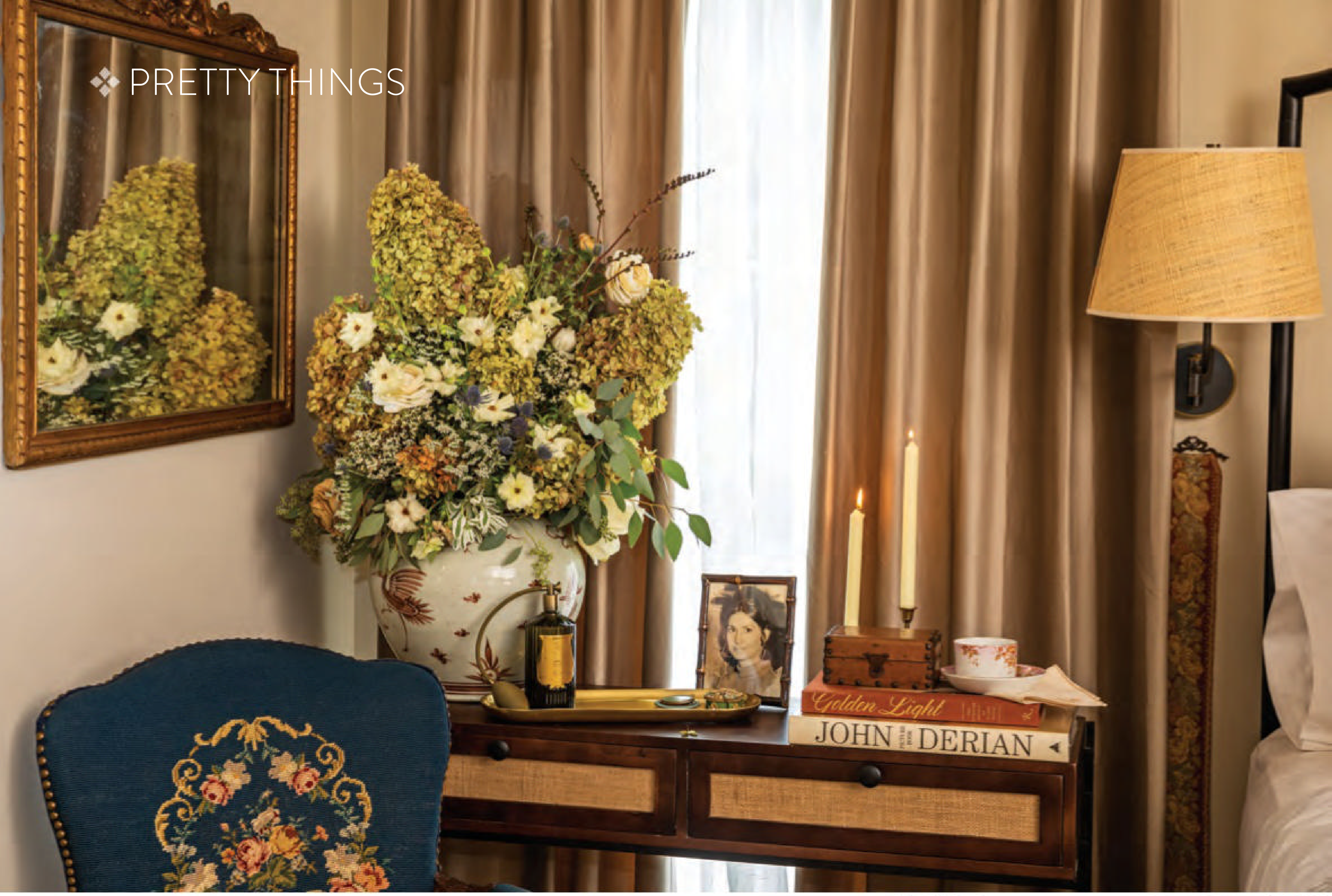
Create an alluring sanctuary filled with plush textures and soothing scents, beckoning you to bask in a moment of relaxation.

BY **Claire Pool** | STYLING BY **Maghan Armstrong** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Stephanie Welbourne Steele**

(Top left) Balfour Euro Sham, $276, and Balfour Fleur De Lis Decorative Pillow, $154; Eastern Accents, easternaccents.com. Sana Light Gray Organic Sheet Set, king size, $380; John Robshaw, johnrobshaw.com. (Bottom left) Executive Leather Weekly Planner in tan, $150; ROYCE, royce.us. White Match Cloche, $34; Found, foundbham.com. SOi Candle in Ambre Tonka, 15 oz., $34.99; Lifelyles, lifelyles.com. (Above) Botany Study Blue 3 and 4, $235 each; Found, foundbham.com.



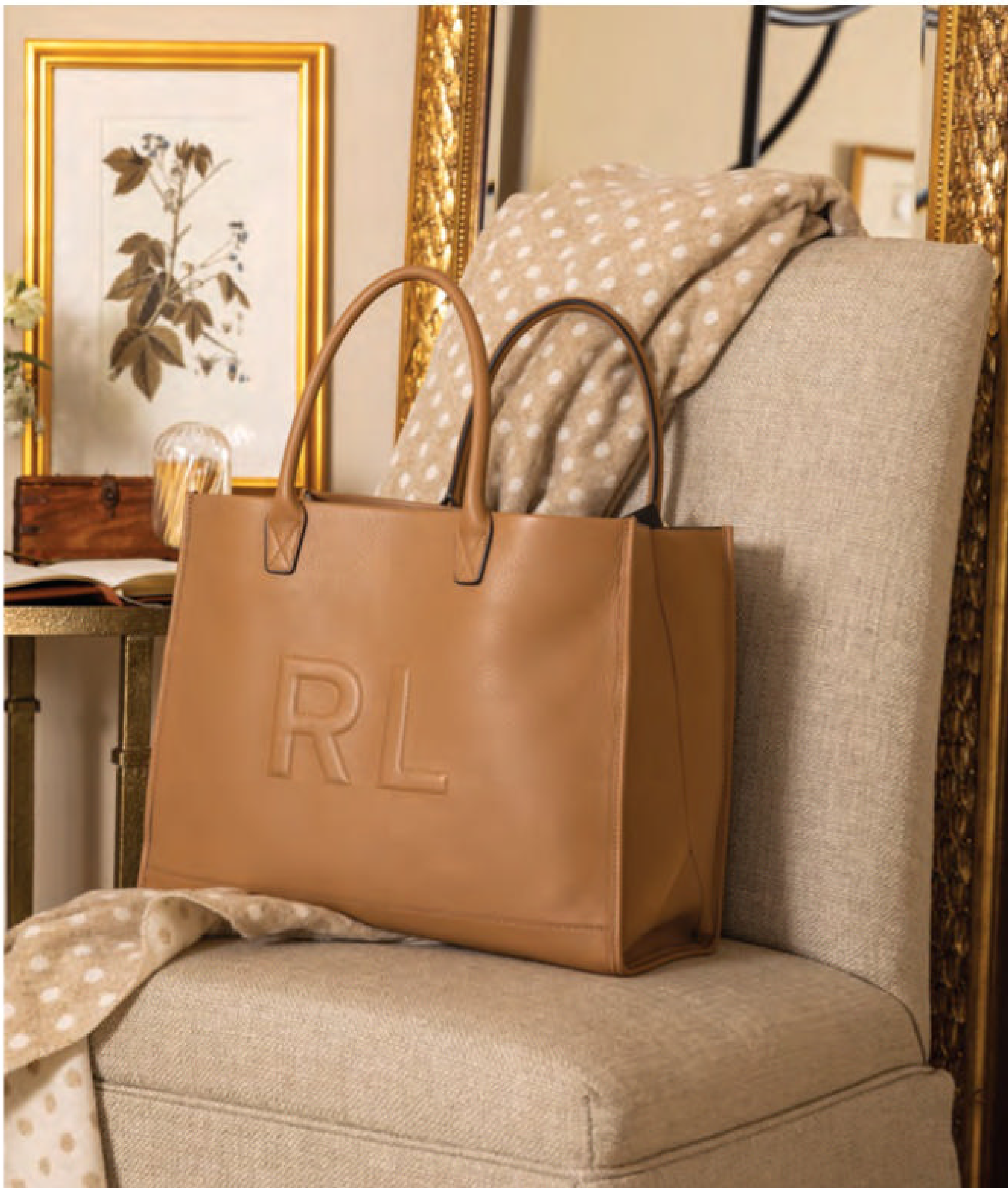
Flying Arch Canopy Bed in black baroque with ivory linen, king size, $6,670; Worthen Custom Iron and Brass Furniture, worthenfurniture.com. Balfour Duvet Cover, king size, $824, and Amberlynn Pleated Bed Skirt, king size, $324; Eastern Accents, easternaccents.com. Framed Intaglio, $185 each; Nona Ruth's, nonaruths.com. Premium Australian Sheepskin Rug in linen, 2'x4.6', $149; Overland, overland.com. Lush Velvet Curtains in stone, 30'x96', $457 per panel; Loft Curtains, loftcurtains.com. Joa's White wall and trim paint, $115 per can; Farrow & Ball, farrow-ball.com.



“THE POWER OF FINDING BEAUTY IN THE HUMBLEST THINGS MAKES HOME HAPPY AND LIFE LOVELY.”

—LOUISA MAY ALCOTT, AUTHOR

(Above) Cire Trudon Ernesto Room Spray, $240; Hudson Grace, hudsongracesf.com. *Golden Light: The Interior Design of Nickey Kehoe* by Todd Nickey and Amy Kehoe (Rizzoli, 2020), $55, and *John Derian Picture Book* by John Derian (Artisan, 2016), $75; Lifelyles, lifelyles.com. Montpellier Sconce, $598; Serena & Lily, serenaandlily.com. (Right) Kress XL Tote in camel, $325; Leatherology, leatherology.com. Merino Lambswool Throw in dots, $160; Found, foundbham.com.



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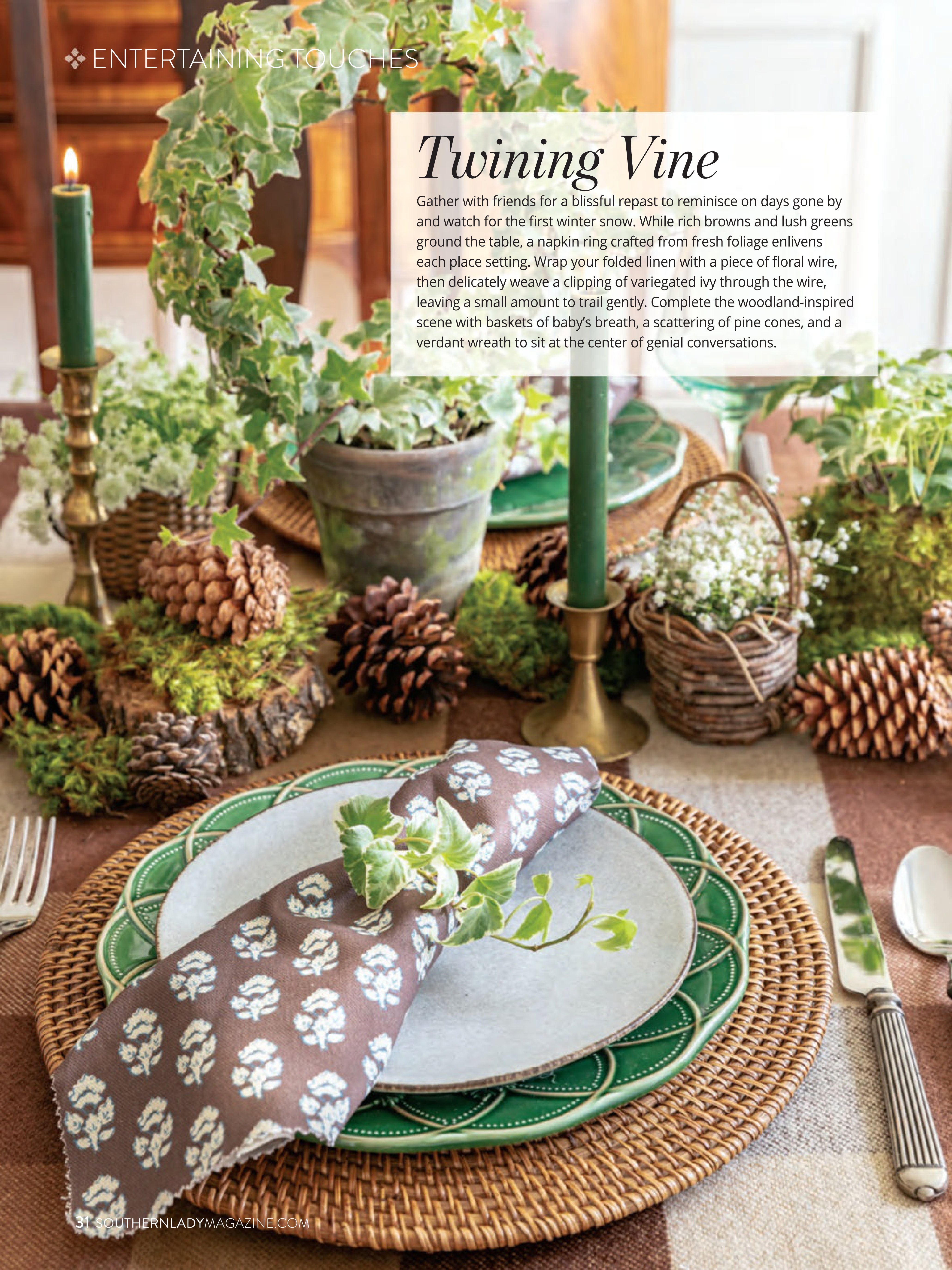

Twining Vine

Gather with friends for a blissful repast to reminisce on days gone by and watch for the first winter snow. While rich browns and lush greens ground the table, a napkin ring crafted from fresh foliage enlivens each place setting. Wrap your folded linen with a piece of floral wire, then delicately weave a clipping of variegated ivy through the wire, leaving a small amount to trail gently. Complete the woodland-inspired scene with baskets of baby's breath, a scattering of pine cones, and a verdant wreath to sit at the center of genial conversations.

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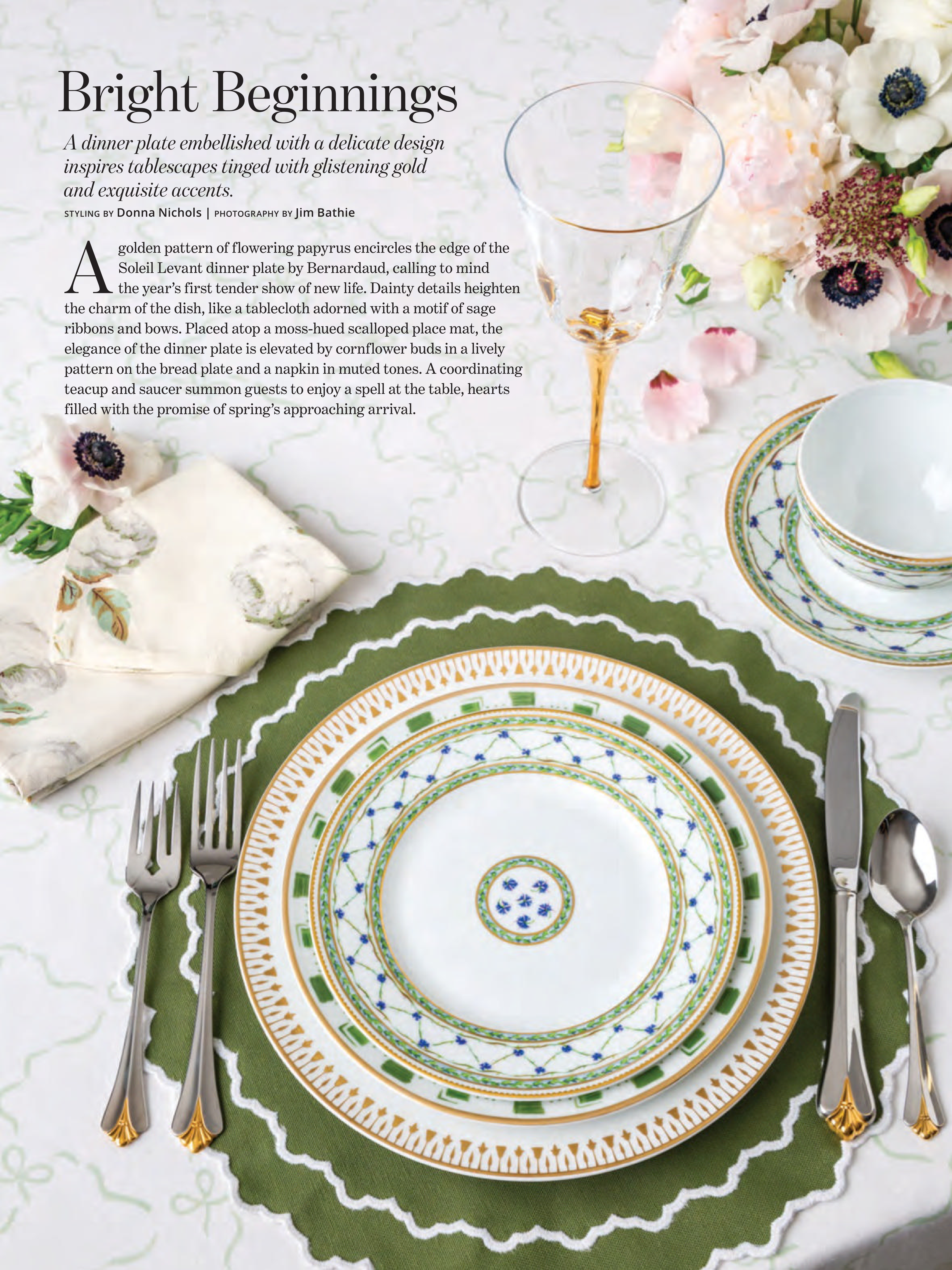
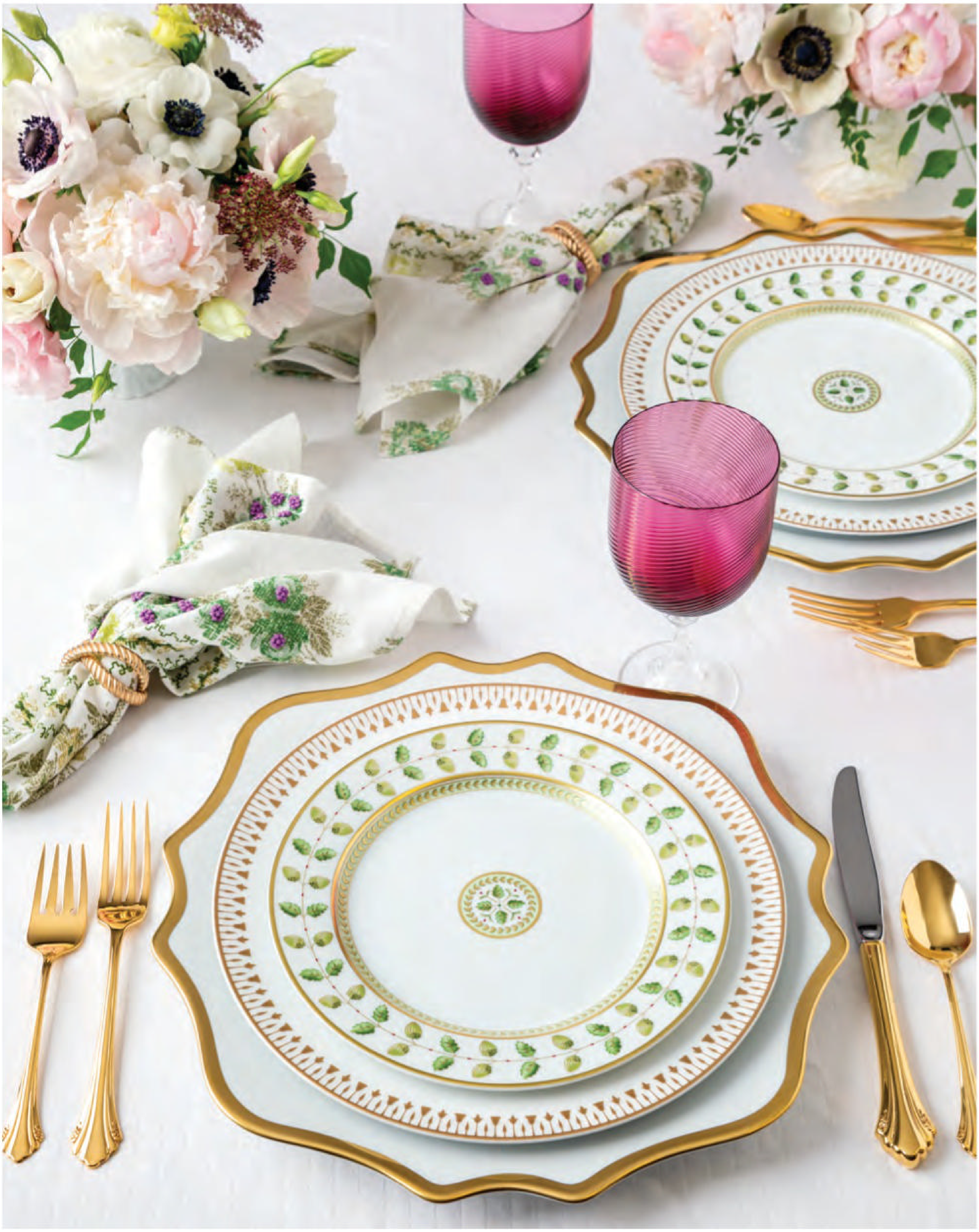
Bright Beginnings

A dinner plate embellished with a delicate design inspires tablescapes tinged with glistening gold and exquisite accents.

STYLING BY Donna Nichols | PHOTOGRAPHY BY Jim Bathie

A golden pattern of flowering papyrus encircles the edge of the Soleil Levant dinner plate by Bernardaud, calling to mind the year's first tender show of new life. Dainty details heighten the charm of the dish, like a tablecloth adorned with a motif of sage ribbons and bows. Placed atop a moss-hued scalloped place mat, the elegance of the dinner plate is elevated by cornflower buds in a lively pattern on the bread plate and a napkin in muted tones. A coordinating teacup and saucer summon guests to enjoy a spell at the table, hearts filled with the promise of spring's approaching arrival.





Suggesting the radiance of the sun peeking through the season's chilly embrace, matching gilded details on the charger, silverware, and napkin rings accent the inspiration plate and its leaf-encircled salad companion. Vivid fuchsia glassware and bright floral napkins beckon the thought of blossoms to come alongside fresh bouquets of blush peonies, white anemones, and pink ranunculus.

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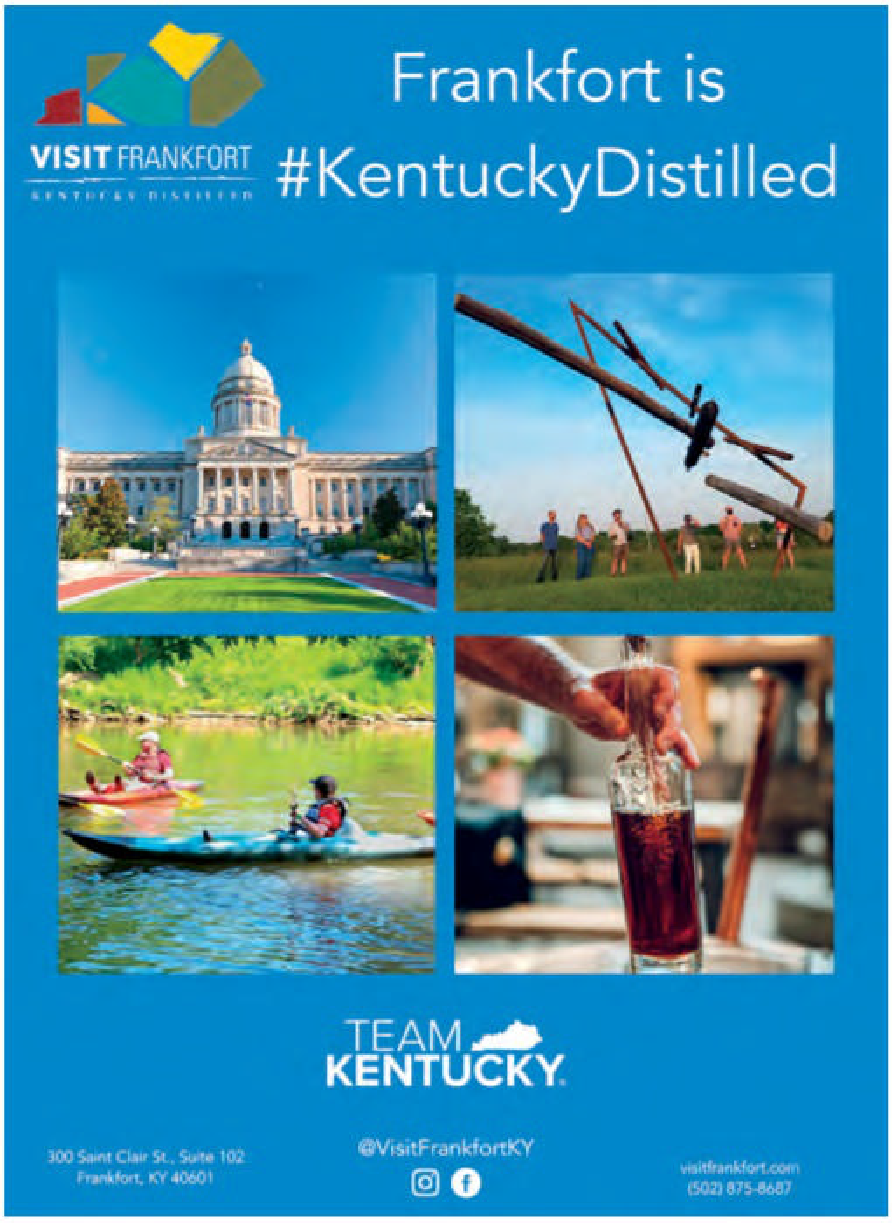
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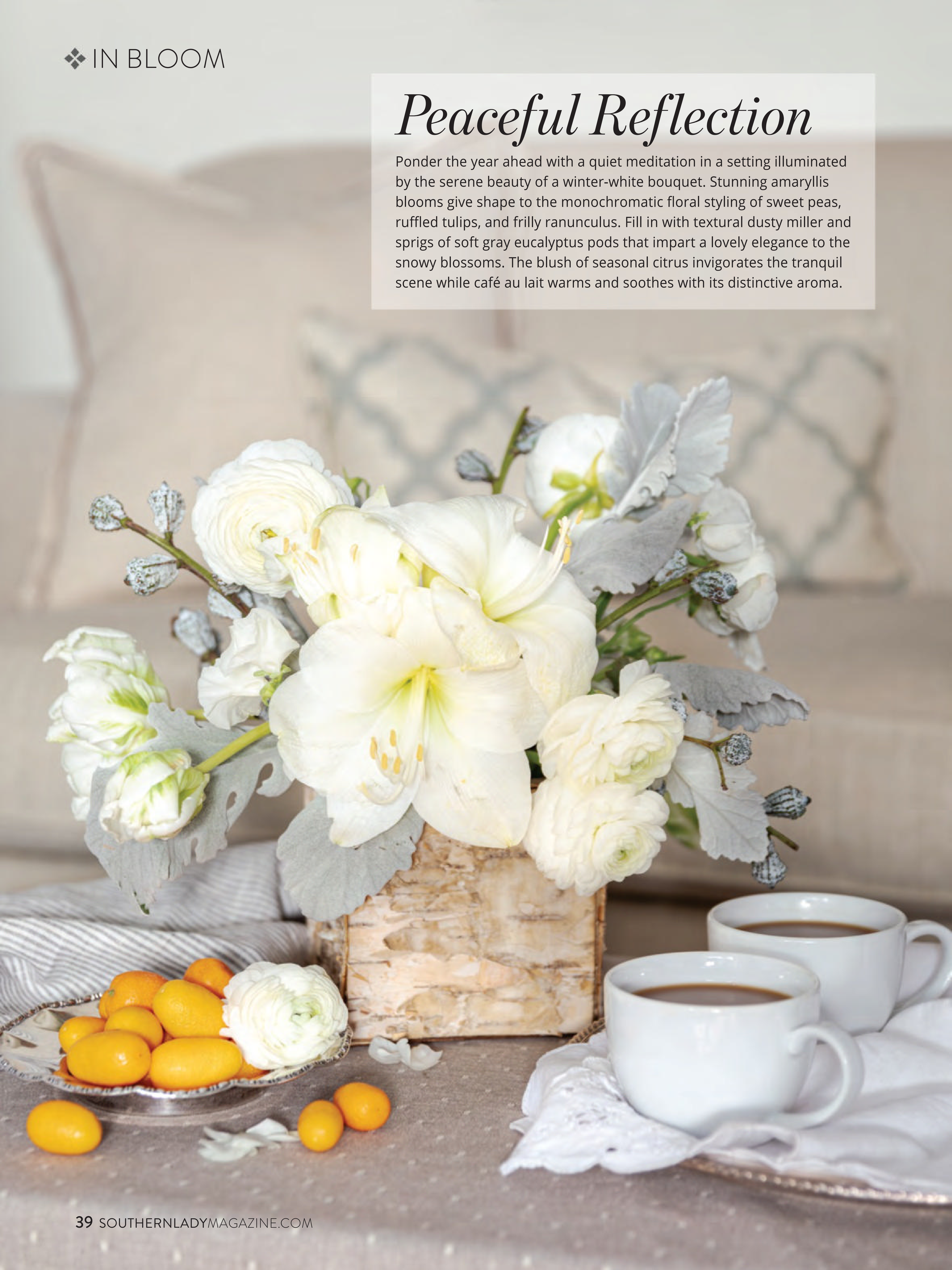
Peaceful Reflection

Ponder the year ahead with a quiet meditation in a setting illuminated by the serene beauty of a winter-white bouquet. Stunning amaryllis blooms give shape to the monochromatic floral styling of sweet peas, ruffled tulips, and frilly ranunculus. Fill in with textural dusty miller and sprigs of soft gray eucalyptus pods that impart a lovely elegance to the snowy blossoms. The blush of seasonal citrus invigorates the tranquil scene while café au lait warms and soothes with its distinctive aroma.



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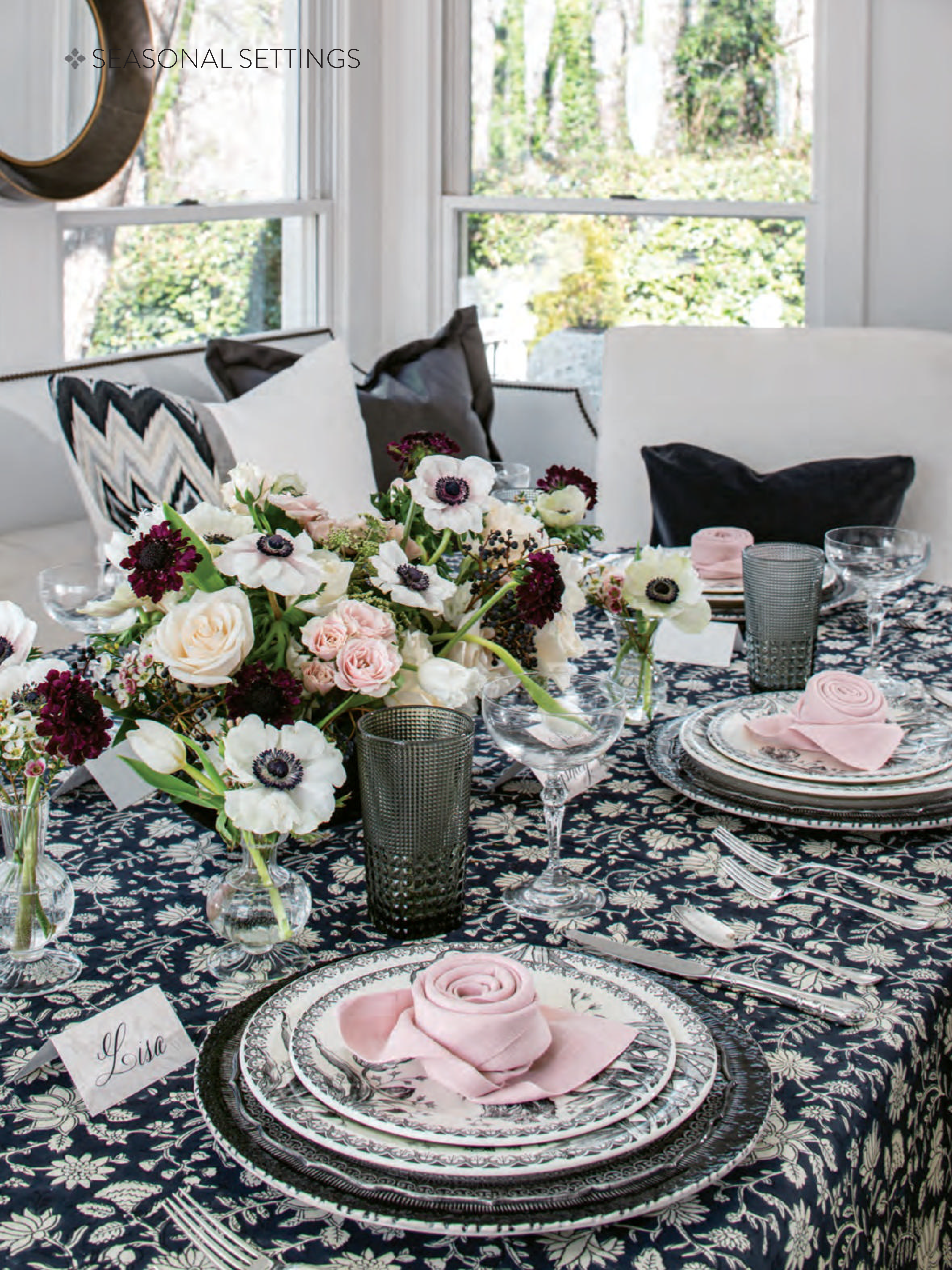
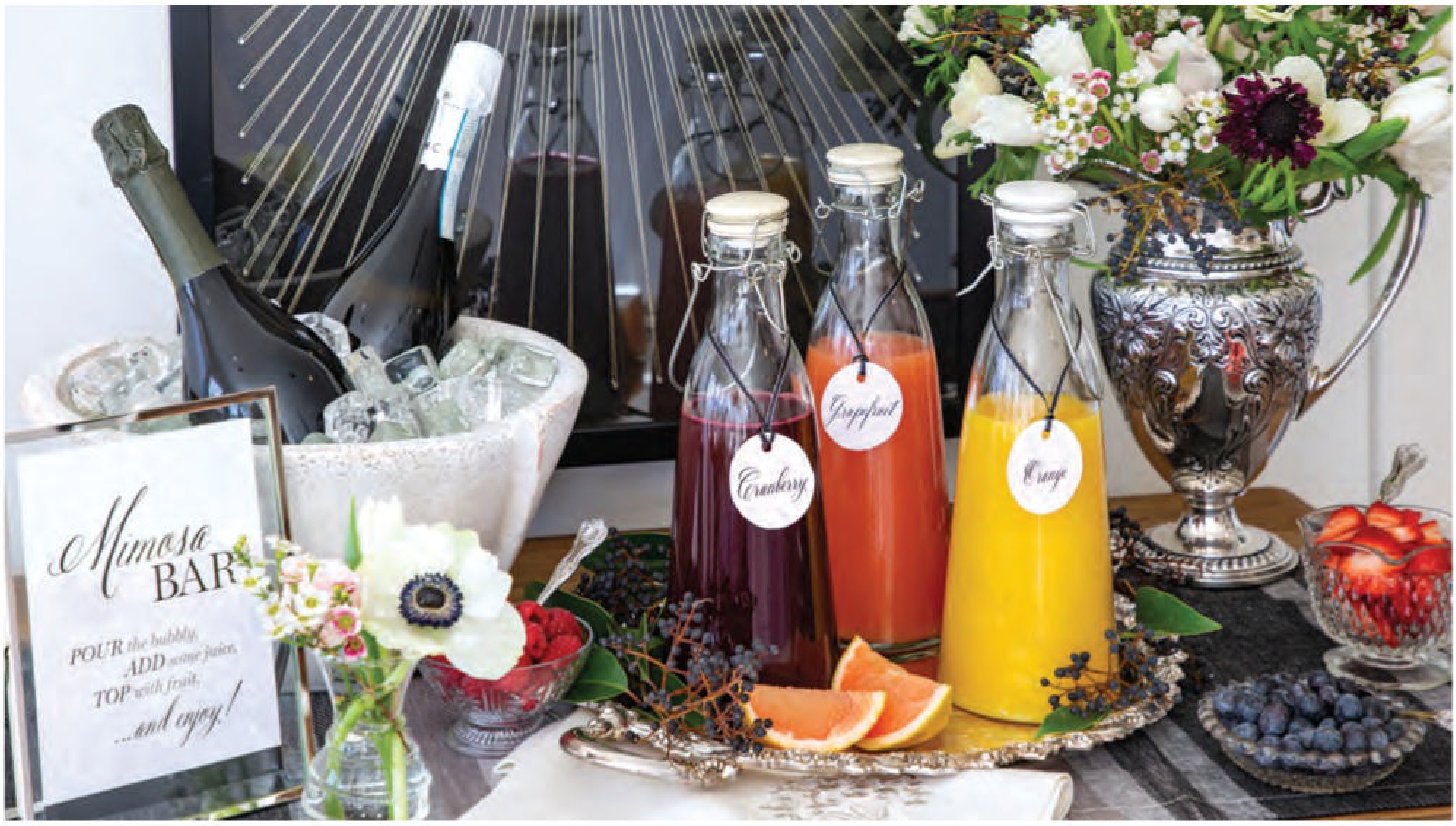

Lisa

Divine Duet

PLAYFUL ENERGY AND ANIMATED STYLE BOLSTER A BUOYANT SPIRIT FOR A CELEBRATION TOUTING OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE COLOR SPECTRUM.

STYLING BY **Sidney Bragiel** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **John O'Hagan**



DASHING FLOURISHES A duo of bold black and white dances across this table, evoking counterpoints like a cloudless winter day where the warmth of the sun and chill in the air comingle to everyone's delight. Dramatic, stylized flowers on the tablecloth impart contrast that brings forward a striking centerpiece of equally divergent blooms. Snowy anemones with dark centers, blushing roses both petite and grand, dangling tulips, and sprightly black scabiosa coalesce with hydrangeas, Queen Anne's lace, and pepperberry. Smaller bouquets extend the floral show while an artful tulip design lends graceful movement to dinner and salad dishes atop a textured monochromatic charger. The fanciful rose-shaped napkin fold imparts a light touch, framed by smoky tumblers and silverware that contributes a modern take on Victorian style. On a sideboard, a trio of juices keeps company with fresh fruit and Champagne, encouraging guests to design their own bubbly mimosa with a garnish. Waxflowers join the cast of botanicals in a stunning silver pitcher beside the effervescent beverage offerings, which are sure to enliven the fête.

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UNDER THE GEORGIA SKY

New year, new adventures are ready to be had in the great state of Georgia.

Let the breeze guide you from the mossy oak-filled coastal towns through the scenic mountain dales to the fast-paced, light-filled cities. No matter where you venture in the Peach State, you'll find delicious meals, enthralling attractions, and that trademark Southern hospitality.

ELLIJAY ELEGANCE

Tucked into the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Ellijay in Gilmer County is the perfect getaway for the whole family. A rising must-see destination, this picturesque town offers you the chance to escape the ordinary. Explore the great outdoors, antiques stores, and local tastes and attractions.

Don't let this quiet mountain town fool you—Ellijay has culinary options that rival any city. Whether you feel like sampling authentic Cuban American fare at Country Corner Kitchen, sipping cocktails with a view of the mountains at The Roof, or visiting regional classics like the Pink Pig and Cantaberry, Ellijay's restaurants will have you hungry for more.

After you've had some of the best food the South has to offer, swing by one of the local vineyards to sample locally grown wine. With almost a dozen vineyards and counting, Ellijay is a rising can't-miss destination on every wine lover's list. Visit a few vineyards each day of your weekend wine getaway or book a shuttle service that will pick you up at your cabin.

Once best known for its antiques stores, Downtown Ellijay is the ideal place to spend an afternoon shopping for your next purchase. Looking for the perfect English import? Check out Antiques on North Main for a beautiful selection of English furniture and fine porcelain. Want even more vintage collectibles? You can't beat Rey's Relics, The Third Hummingbird, or Linda's Outback Antiques & More.

If you're looking for numerous outdoor activities for adventurers with various skill levels, head outside and enjoy the natural wonders Ellijay and surrounding Gilmer County offer. Embrace the sparkling waters of Carters Lake and the charming natural shoreline. Visit the local marina to rent a boat and spend your day fishing and relaxing on the lake. Off lake, enjoy cozy camping sites and copious hiking trails.

UN(WINE)D IN ELLIJAY THIS WINTER

Whether you prefer sipping crisp rosé in a boutique tasting room or enjoy sampling robust wines with a view to rival Napa, you can't miss out on the South's fastest-growing wine destination.
After all, winter is the perfect excuse to wine!

SCAN HERE

FOR OUR DIGITAL GUIDE!

PICK
ELLIJAY
GEORGIA

SAVANNAH ON YOUR MIND

As you settle in for cozy winter nights, plan your spring escape to the coastal city of Savannah, Georgia. With the region's year-round balmy temperatures, you don't have to wait till May to enjoy the fragrant florals while strolling down historic cobblestone streets. Known for the soft veil of Spanish moss covering trees along the city streets, Savannah is the perfect destination for all things botanical. Visit one of the 22 green spaces within the town or Forsyth Park's Fragrant Garden, a delightful area filled with the sweet and spicy scent of the locally beloved azaleas.

With gorgeous sunshine, aromatic blooms, and coastal breezes, Savannah is the ideal destination to welcome all things spring, including festival season. Springtime plays host to one of the most popular festivals in the Southeast, the Savannah Music Festival, which boasts international recognition for its cross-genre appeal. Not in the mood for a large festival? Savannah's rich nightlife is home to dozens of venues. Enjoy a laid-back evening at places like Jazz'd Tapas Bar to enjoy the classic Spanish food tradition while listening to blues, swing, or jazz tunes.

With its ever-growing list of award-winning restaurants, Savannah is making a name for itself as a must-see destination for foodies. Run by Michelin-rated, James Beard Award-nominated chef Andrew Brochu, Brochu's Family Tradition, featuring coastal-inspired dishes from barbecue to crab boils, will open this spring in the eclectic and artsy Starland District. Owner of award-winning Pizzeria Vittoria, Kyle Jacovino embarks on a new journey with Lucía, a casual Starland District haunt that will serve delicious grinders on crusty bread baked in-house and a variety of house-made pasta dishes. Visitors to both are sure to come hungry and leave happy.

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Gather your family to enjoy a getaway in one-of-a-kind Cartersville. What other place can boast being the home to Georgia's oldest covered bridge, the world's first outdoor Coca-Cola wall advertisement, and the largest camel herd in Georgia? This beautiful burg offers an exciting mix of cultural sites, entertainment venues, and top-notch breweries, wineries, and tasting rooms.

During your visit, reconnect with nature at Red Top Mountain State Park. Best known for housing the 12,000-acre Lake Allatoona, this state park is home to more than 15 miles of hiking trails, offering plenty of scenic views for both beginner and expert hikers. Whether hiking along Pine Mountain Trail to view Kennesaw Mountain, camping at Pine Acres Retreat, or kayaking with Euharlee Creek Outfitters, there are countless ways to explore Cartersville's scenic bounty.

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BLUE RIDGE

Cozy cabins, amazing restaurants, and a charming downtown—enjoy all this and more in Blue Ridge, Georgia, near the Tennessee/North Carolina state line. Only 90 miles north of Atlanta, it's the perfect location for families to unwind.

This welcoming hamlet has a surprising array of restaurants, shops, and galleries dotting the landscape. Enhance your trip with a whimsical journey through the Appalachian foothills aboard the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway.

While you're there, answer the call of the abundant outdoor activities. From exploring local waterfalls to fishing at the Trout Capital of Georgia and hiking the Appalachian Trail or Benton MacKaye Trail, there's something for everyone.

LAKE PEACHTREE

PEACHTREE CITY

A master-planned city in the Atlanta metro area is changing the face of tourism with a holistic approach to attracting visitors. Peachtree City recently launched PTCpassport, a new, interactive Virtual Visitor's Center accompanied by a series of video vignettes that piece together the story of Peachtree City.

While PTCpassport allows a virtual visit, an in-person getaway to Peachtree City can't be missed! With over 100 dining establishments, eight hotels, and all the entertainment you could want, the world is your oyster in Peachtree City. Hop on a golf cart—the preferred mode of transport for locals—and enjoy the international culinary scene, live music, and movie set tours. Cruise over to Peachtree City for a little bit of everything you want on a dream vacation.

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HELEN SQUARE

ALPINE HELEN

Dreaming of running away to a picturesque European village? Look no further than Alpine Helen, Georgia. The storybook town is perched on the Chattahoochee River in the heart of White County. The Old-World architecture, natural beauty, and aroma of Bavarian cuisine wafting through the fresh mountain air makes Alpine Helen a must-see destination for world travelers. Only, there is no passport required.

Stroll along the cobblestone streets as you browse the 150 clothing boutiques, toy emporiums, gift shops, and more. No matter what you do, make sure to sample the traditional German cuisine at one of the more than 25 establishments to choose from. Strudel, schnitzel, pretzels—any decision you make will be a delightful one.

ALPHARETTA

Perfectly situated between the rustic North Georgia Mountains and bustling Atlanta, the modest yet mighty city of Alpharetta has all the glitz of a big city with the scenic views of the countryside.

Alpharetta, Georgia, epitomizes Southern charm, bringing stunning shopping, delectable dining, and unique events together to create the perfect getaway location.

Eat your way through a lavish food and beverage scene with over 200 dining options, renew your closet in any of our 250 stores, enjoy unique attractions, live music, and find off-the-beaten path activities to satisfy everyone.

Book your room at one of our 30 modern and upscale hotels that are centrally located and convenient to shopping, dining, and fun things to do.

Alpharetta
GEORGIA

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1 EXPLORE A *culinary haven!* Eat your way through a lavish food scene with an unbeatable lineup of **top-notch eateries** and **one-of-a-kind culinary hot spots**.

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4 THERE'S ALWAYS *time for tea!* Featured on *Explore Georgia* as one of **Georgia's 10 Best Tea Rooms**, The Ginger Room, is one for your destination tea bucket list.

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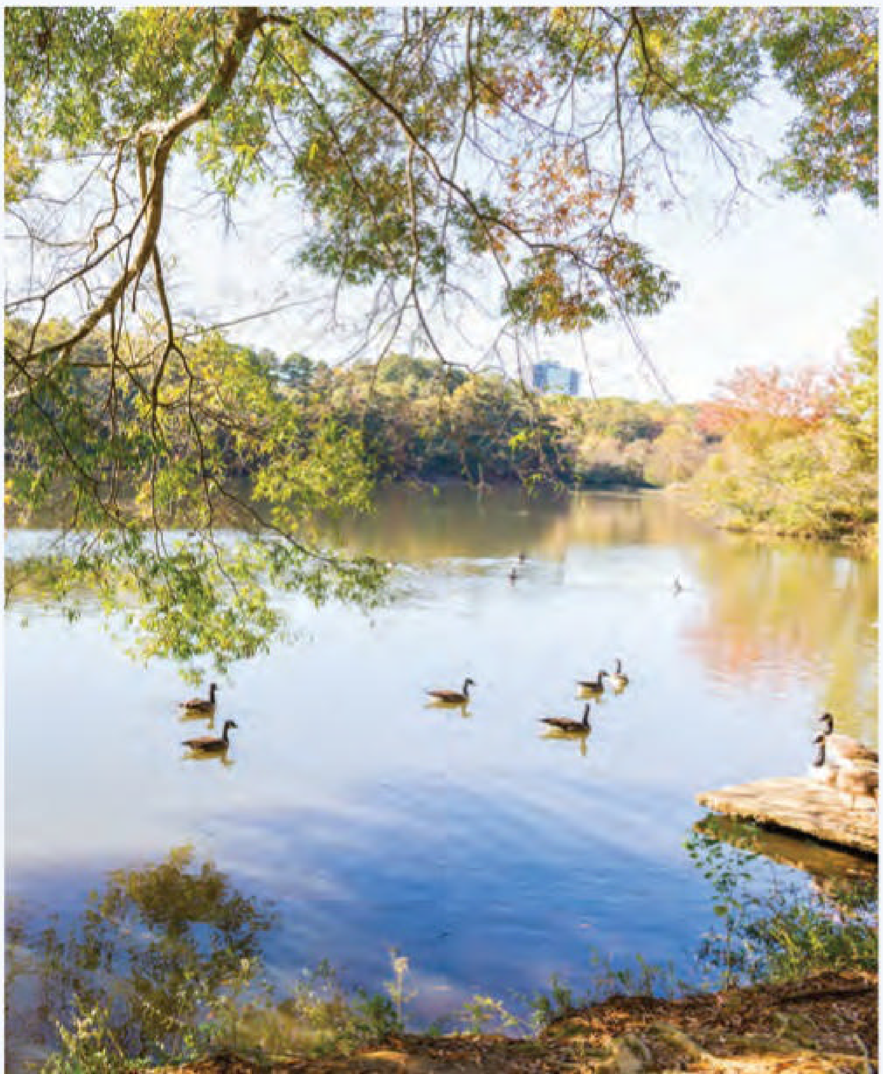
Petite Violette
2948

ESCAPE TO BROOKHAVEN

Artfully combining the vibrance of a metropolitan area with the ease of a small town, Brookhaven is always a good idea. Centrally located just north of Atlanta, this thriving, youthful city is equal parts family vacation destination, romantic getaway, and foodie stop with a dusting of outdoor fun and cultural intrigue on top.



Its five distinctive neighborhoods offer visitors a chance to find their perfect fit to enjoy all Brookhaven has to offer. Yet nothing draws people in like the scents and tastes of the award-winning culinary scene.

Family owned and operated since 1974, Petite Violette was opened by German brothers-in-law Helmut Bittl and Wolfgang Gropp, who was trained by protégés of Auguste Escoffier, the father of modern French cuisine. Today, Anthony and Michael Gropp employ the handed-down techniques and recipes so you can enjoy comforting French classics like coquille Saint Jacques and boeuf bourguignon, as well as various Bavarian and German plates.

Petite Violette sets the bar high for their live entertainment. On Fridays and Saturdays, they are hosting an interactive murder mystery dinner series, "Murder, Mystery, and Mayhem." Hilarious storyline mash-ups, such as "Top Gunnerton" (*Top Gun* and *Bridgerton*) or "Yellowstonezark" (*Yellowstone* and *Ozark*), are paired with a four-course dinner and flowing wine.

When you're not wining and dining, explore a few of the city's attractions. Tour one of the nationally and internationally acclaimed exhibits at Oglethorpe University Museum of Art. Breathe the fresh air in the 135-acre Murphey Candler Park on one of their jogging routes, biking paths, or playgrounds. And, of course, peruse your way through Brookhaven's many boutiques and shops. Just a short 20-minute drive away from an international airport, Brookhaven is your haven away from home. Explore Brookhaven, Georgia. Belong here.

So Close You Can
TASTE IT

Belong Here.

explore
BROOKHAVEN
GEORGIA

Escape to a whole new destination right under your nose. With locally owned restaurants, lush parks, walkable shops, and small-town hospitality just outside the big city, Brookhaven is as easy to get to as it is to enjoy. Welcome to your perfect place to be and belong.

Start your adventure at exploreBrookhaven.com.

GEORGIA'S 2023 EVENTS

JANUARY 1–FEBRUARY 20:
Alpine Winter Lights, Alpine Helen

FEBRUARY 11:
Fasching (German Mardi Gras), Alpine Helen

FEBRUARY 17–19:
Annual WinterFest Arts Tour, Alpine Helen

FEBRUARY 18:
Fire & Ice Chili Cook-Off, Blue Ridge

FEBRUARY 26–MARCH 4:
Alpharetta Restaurant Week

MARCH–NOVEMBER: **Brookhaven Farmers Market, Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

MARCH 16–19: **St. Patrick's Day events, Savannah**

MARCH 25–26:
Brookhaven Cherry Blossom Festival

APRIL 15: **Sip Brookhaven, Oglethorpe University**

APRIL 29: **Trout & Outdoor Adventures Festival, Blue Ridge**

MAY 11: **Taste of Alpharetta**

MAY 27–28: **Alpharetta Arts Streetfest**

MAY 27–28: **Arts in the Park, Blue Ridge**

JUNE 10–11: **32nd annual RockFest at Tellus Science Museum, Cartersville**

JULY 1–4:
Savannah Stars and Stripes July 4th Weekend

JULY 4: **Fourth of July fireworks, Tybee Island**

SEPTEMBER 16: **Beautiful Backroads Century Bike Ride, Cartersville**

SEPTEMBER 16: **Blue Ridge Blues & BBQ Festival**

SEPTEMBER 16–17:
Rose Lawn Arts Festival, Cartersville

SEPTEMBER 19–24: **Savannah Jazz Festival**

SEPTEMBER 21: **Taste Brookhaven**

OCTOBER 13–14: **Wire & Wood Alpharetta Songwriters Festival**

OCTOBER 19–21:
Cowboy Festival & Symposium, Cartersville

NOVEMBER 19–DECEMBER 31:
Savannah Holly Days events

DECEMBER: **Light Up Brookhaven**

SOUTH FULTON

Just 15 minutes south of downtown Atlanta lies one of Georgia's best-kept secrets: the burgeoning City of South Fulton. A little bit country, a little bit rock and roll, and a whole lot of jazz and entertainment can be found in and around the city limits.

Several theaters, playhouses, and movie studios call the surrounding area home, including Tyler Perry Studios and Atlanta Metro Studios. Check the concert schedule for Wolf Creek Amphitheater—a 435-acre open-air theater with fantastic acoustics and seating ranging from reserved tables to stadium seats and lush lawn spaces.

The Chattahoochee River flows along the eastern side of the City of South Fulton, offering visitors a view of the region's famed waterway. Work in a round of golf on the beautiful greens and amenities at the Wolf Creek Golf Club. Tennis buffs will be in heaven at the South Fulton Tennis Center, where tennis leagues, youth and adult serves, clubs, instructional programs, and open play are welcome on any of the 20 hard-surface or four clay-surface courts.

For a walk on the wilder side, make a trip to historic Boat Rock. Preserved by the Southeastern Climbers Coalition and one of the first bouldering competition sites in the US, the Boat Rock bouldering area is home to unique egg-shape granite formations approximately 325 million years old. It's a must-see for climbing enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.

Grab a bite at any of the celebrated restaurants in town. Come breakfast time, you can't beat fresh doughnuts or bagels from Dough in the Box or modern spins on Southern classics at Gocha's Breakfast Bar and Milk & Honey. For luxury dining, try Blaze Steak and Seafood owned by Kandi Burruss and Todd Tucker, Mulan Asian Cuisine for traditional Asian cuisine, or Baltimore Crab & Seafood. Catch live jazz and dinner at St. James Live for a swanky lounge vibe or at Sandtown Pub where everybody knows your name.

No matter how you like to spend your vacation, you can find it in the City of South Fulton because more lives here.

Savor the Flavor of South Fulton

City of
SOUTH
FULTON
More Lives Here
South Fulton CVB

From breakfast to barbecue, Island to Italian, Asian to American, family style to fine dining, enjoy a delicious homestyle experience or unique adventures from around the world right here in City of South Fulton.
Get your taste buds ready-set-go!

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Bella Belle
Bella Belle

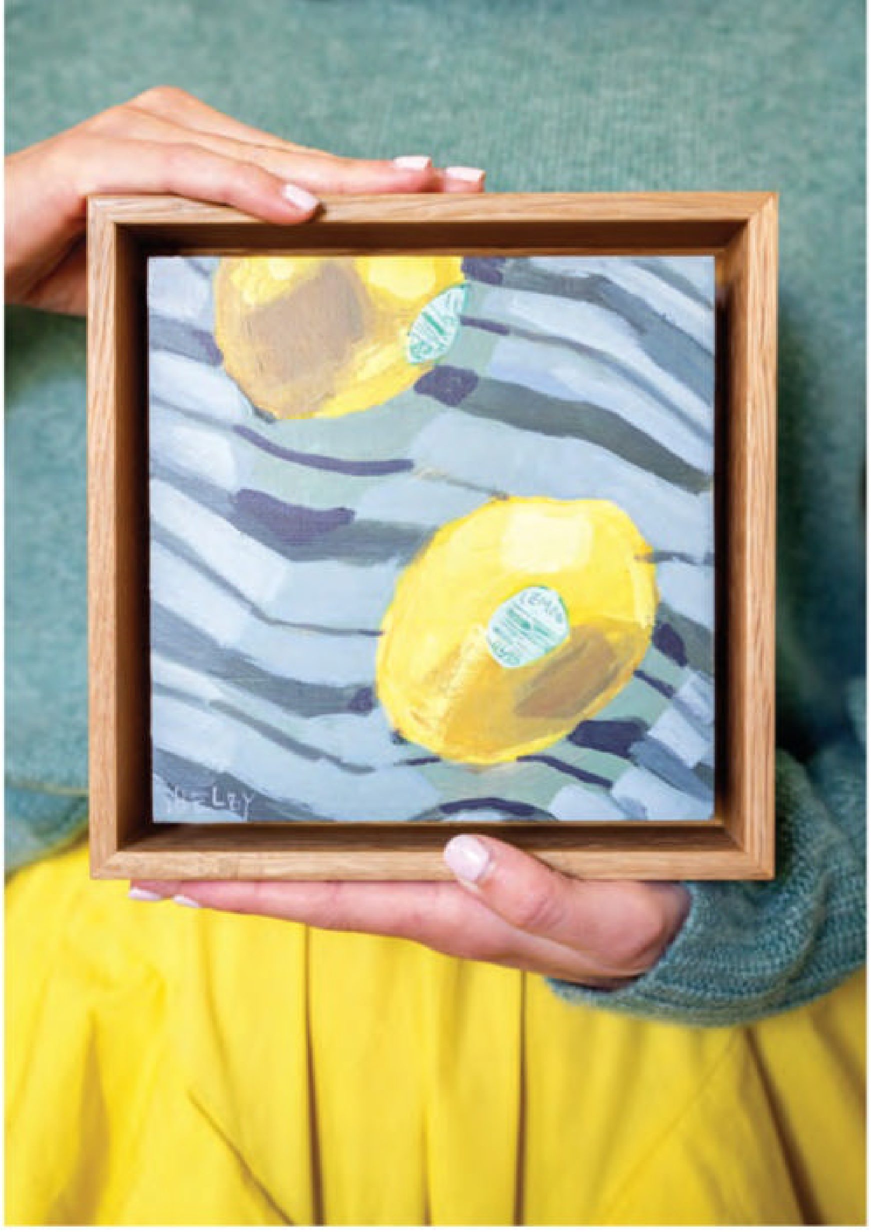
Two thousand twenty

SOUTHERN

ENTREPRENEURS

2023

MEET SIX ENTERPRISING SOUTHERN WOMEN WHO CHANNELED THEIR PERSONAL DREAMS INTO ROBUST AND REWARDING BUSINESSES WITH A BRIGHT FUTURE.



CURATED WITH CARE

A KENTUCKY ART DEALER SPEARHEADS AN ONLINE GALLERY TO CELEBRATE THE WELLSPRING OF CAPTIVATING WORKS CREATED BY WOMEN IN THE SOUTH.

BY **Ashley Shaw** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Kelli Boyd Photography**

Whether busy moms who take up paintbrushes between carpooling kids or lawyers who chisel out time for their creative outlets, it's the face behind each canvas that fuels Mollie Creason, founder of Well + Wonder Artist Collective. "Some of my artists are part-time teachers; one is a full-time attorney for a federal judge; some paint on the weekends. These artists can really make what they want out of their careers," says Mollie, whose website showcases the work of about 40 talented women across the region.

Mollie, a lifelong art enthusiast with an art history degree, pondered the direction of her own career in 2015 after the birth of her first child. She'd learned the ropes of marketing original pieces during a stint at an esteemed portrait company, giving her the confidence to start representing artists on her own. Especially as a new mother, Mollie appreciated the flexibility of working as a solo broker. But her creative side nudged her in another direction.

She already was helping clients take high-quality photos of their work to sell it on modern platforms. "The artists were really seeing how far they could extend their reach through social media versus showing their work in a traditional gallery space," Mollie says. She thought that if people were buying paintings on Instagram, they surely would shop a well-curated web exhibition.

Mollie ran with the idea, focusing her efforts on building an inclusive community for collectors and creators alike. "We try to present artwork in a welcoming, approachable way for everybody. It's also important for me to share who the artist is, to tell their stories," says Mollie, a native of Louisville, Kentucky.

Well + Wonder exclusively features female artists, many of them from southeastern states. Customers discover new pieces in oil, acrylic, watercolor, and other mediums as they are released weekly. In addition to maintaining a beautiful digital gallery,

> “WE COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF BUYING AND ENJOYING ART. MOST OF WHAT WE HEAR IS, ‘THIS [PIECE] IS EVEN BETTER IN PERSON.’”
>
> —MOLLIE CREASON,
> WELL + WONDER FOUNDER

Mollie and her small team spotlight the artists through blog posts and a special series that addresses art-related quandaries, like picking out the perfect frame and measuring a space for a piece you love.

An avid collector herself, Mollie shares expert advice with those seeking to invest in artwork without feeling intimidated or breaking the bank. “I’ve learned that I serve two customers: the Southern woman who’s looking to collect original art, and also these artists,” Mollie says, noting that a couple of them were among the six she represented when the business launched. The exposure also has paved the way for collaborations between Well + Wonder artists and interior designers as well as fashion, textile, and wallpaper brands.

Mollie always has considered the South a plentiful well of wonder-evoking artwork—hence the company’s name—and she enjoys presenting a taste of it. “Our clients are buying art because they feel a connection to it,” Mollie explains. “They say, ‘I bought this beach painting because it reminds me of the North Carolina beaches where our family vacations,’ or ‘My sister went to college with such-and-such artist, and I was so excited to collect one of her pieces.’ It’s that personal connection that people love. And I think that’s such a Southern thing.”

For information, visit wellandwondercollective.com.

(THIS PAGE) PHOTOS BY MORGAN DUKE PHOTOGRAPHY

A LEGACY OF LETTERS

A GEORGIA EDUCATOR FOLLOWS HER CREATIVE INSTINCTS AND TAKES TO THE INTERNET WITH EXQUISITELY RENDERED MONOGRAMS AND FONTS FIT FOR ANY PURPOSE.

BY **Ashley Shaw**

By the time Pam Shuler's mother opened a monogram shop in the 1970s, every sock and sweater in her childhood closet was stitched with her initials. "She embroidered everything," Pam says of her mom, Bobbie, whose enthusiasm for monograms laid the underpinnings for Shuler Studio's online repertoire of custom-crafted letterings.

For brides, newborns, and countless others, Pam has fashioned thousands of monograms with up to six interlocking letters. The customization options are endless, as Pam garners inspiration from classic motifs, vintage books, current trends, and the individual style of each client. "We try to get to know the personality of the customer so we know what the personality of the monogram will be like," says Pam, a native of Columbus, Georgia, who taught high school math for 20 years. Customers also can browse a vast digital library of ready-made monograms and fonts.

Pam tested the waters with a small Etsy store before launching Shuler Studio in 2016 with the designs she'd created on her laptop at Bobbie's bedside. Her mother had Alzheimer's, and as the disease progressed, Pam quit teaching to care for her. "She passed away right when I was starting Shuler Studio," Pam says, noting how proud she feels to carry on her mom's pastime in a very modern way. "Her embroidery machine was the size of a kitchen island. Now, they are tiny! She would be amazed at how it's all changed."

Technology has expanded the possibilities when it comes to embroidery and monogram creation, but the sentimental value of initialed pieces remains steadfast. "When you get a gift that's personalized, it just means a little bit more. Especially for weddings, it's such a beautiful way to signify a couple's union because it's interlocking their names together," explains Carolyn Bettin, Pam's daughter, who came on board to handle marketing and social media for Shuler Studio about four years ago.

While Pam points to her mathematics background for the clean, symmetrical lines and polished curves that distinguish her work, Carolyn says she's always been artistically inclined. "My mom is the most creative person you will ever meet. This business is a natural fit for her," says Carolyn. Pam, in turn, credits the company's growth to support from Carolyn and encouragement from her son, Mattox,

PHOTO BY KATHERINE JOHNSON PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO BY MORGAN DUKE PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO BY ASHLYN CATHEY PHOTOGRAPHY

who started his own successful font foundry in 2013. He gave Pam the nudge she needed to sell her art on a larger scale.

Some of Carolyn's fondest memories include craft projects with Pam and picking out colorful embroidery thread with her grandmother Bobbie, who was admired for her handiwork throughout their community. "It's funny and sweet—at her funeral, the pastor said, 'Raise your hand if you have one of Bobbie's monograms,'" Carolyn says. "Everybody there raised their hand." Now, people the world over have downloaded and enjoyed Pam's artistic letters and monograms—on stationery, dishware, and perhaps, even their socks. "It's really been a family thing," says Carolyn.

For information, visit shulerstudio.com.

PHOTO BY SAMI KATHRYN PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO BY LINDSEY NICOLE PHOTOGRAPHY

HEAD OVER HEELS

LUXURIOUS, FEMININE FOOTWEAR FASHIONED FOR COMFORT BY TWO ENTERPRISING TEXANS KEEPS CLIENTS LIGHT ON THEIR FEET.

BY **Claire Pool** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KT Merry** AND **Laura Gordon Photography**

After finalizing menus, tasting cakes, and arranging seating charts, a bride's last worry on her big day should be anticipating the moment she can finally get off her aching feet. The owners of Bella Belle Shoes hope their stunning but comfortable heels will have her dancing all night long.

"We started Bella Belle when we realized the market was missing pretty and romantic wedding shoes with high-quality details at attainable prices," Erina Ardianto says of the initial idea for the Houston-based company she began with her cofounder, Veronyca Kwan. The results are shoes so gorgeous and easy to wear that pop singer Adele even sported a pair in one of her music videos.

Best friends since high school, Erina and Veronyca used their combined skills as an architect and a business analyst, respectively. The duo began their project part-time outside their day jobs and based it on a shared experience with uncomfortable and unappealing heels. "We knew what women wanted, and we had a clear direction on design aesthetics," Veronyca says.

Connecting with their clientele has become a favorite part of the job, whether it's hearing feedback to improve current styles or drawing inspiration from treasured stories to spark ideas for new designs. "A bride-to-be had just lost her grandmother who loved butterflies and was named Eve. We have this beautiful and whimsical shoe adorned with chiffon butterflies that is also, coincidentally, named Eve," Veronyca says, sharing a cherished memory.

In addition to heels, stylish ballet flats made of pliable, breathable material were one of the first styles that helped put them on the map. "Flats always get a bad [reputation] of being frumpy and unattractive. We found a way to make them pretty, delicate, and comfortable," Erina explains. In evening wear, one of their most favored designs is the one worn by Adele, the Matilda, a stiletto heel with polka dot mesh side panels and a bountiful bow attached at the back. Another popular style is the Audrey, a sleek ivory silk shoe with pearl detailing up the heel.

Now about six years into the industry, Bella Belle has gained a loyal customer base, and plans call for expanding into international markets and building on their evening wear line to become more than a bridal shoe boutique. "Ultimately, we are looking to be the destination brand for occasion shoes," Erina says.

For information, visit bellabelleshoes.com.

PHOTO BY SARAH UNGER

EVERYDAY OPULENCE

LATIN ARTISTRY MELDS WITH SOUTHERN APPEAL IN A POPULAR HOME WARES COMPANY FOUNDED BY A CUBAN-BORN WOMAN WHO CHOSE LOUISIANA AS HOME.

BY **Kate Lorio** | STYLING BY **Mary Beth Jones** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Mac Jamieson** AND **Stephanie Welbourne Steele**

"New Orleans is such an open city," says Beatriz Ball, describing the base for her eponymous company that makes shiny, fuss-free tableware iconically trimmed in silver balls. "You have that whole artistic-minded community that is comfortable there—that whole atmosphere permeates the air—and it's conducive to creativity." While she remains in touch with a past that includes fleeing Cuba for Mexico as a child, settling down in Louisiana profoundly influenced this inventive entrepreneur and her luxury home décor brand.

The roots of Beatriz Ball New Orleans reach back more than 30 years to the founder's youth spent south of the border. There, she developed an interest in local artisan work thanks to her friendship with a family that traded in antiques and metal pieces. Later in her life, she hauled suitcases full of such wares back to New Orleans, gifting them to acquaintances. Passion turned into a new possibility when her mother—also an entrepreneur—convinced Beatriz to build a business out of the demand for alternative metalware, which uses alloys to make functional goods that retain a brilliant sheen without a great deal of polishing.

A young mother herself at the time, Beatriz began with showings at her home between carpooling her children. Her stock rapidly sold out with every event. As her business expanded, she realized that sourcing from mom-and-pop sellers rather than directly from the manufacturer meant she could not ensure quality control. She recruited the help of her younger sister, who still lived in Mexico. "I told her, 'Let's just go to the factory and see how it goes,'" Beatriz says. This pivotal decision led to establishing her own foundry just outside of Mexico City and working relationships with its personnel that have spanned decades.

"It's incredible that using such rudimentary techniques, we can produce pieces that have such high quality," Beatriz says. Carved, molded, cast, and finished with ancient methods by proud expert craftsmen, many of whom were trained by their own fathers and grandfathers, Beatriz Ball products go through an intensive, time-honored process that ensures excellent results.

An alloy exclusive to the company gives each accessory both the luster of silver and effortless useability for modern life; trays, bowls, and platters can go straight from the oven to the table. With the success of alternative metal, Beatriz went on to expand the company's lineup to include linens and goods fashioned from melamine, wood, acrylic, and glass.

Now, wholesale representation means Beatriz Ball New Orleans is sold in stores across the country, including Neiman Marcus. But success hasn't diminished the creator's enthusiasm for what she has built. "I wake up in the morning excited to jump into my workday and all the projects I have," she says. "I just love what I do."

For information, visit beatrizball.com.

embellish
EMBELLISH

FASHION FORWARD

A LONGTIME WOMEN'S CLOTHING SHOP IN TENNESSEE GETS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FROM A CUSTOMER WHO ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTIONS AT THE RIGHT TIME.

BY **Marie Baxley** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Steve Rizzo**

Big city life, a love of fashion, the dark cloud of the pandemic, and a little serendipity all figured into the recipe that gave Ann Trammell Newton the confidence to buy a well-known boutique and put her own mark on the enterprise.

"It just kind of fell in my lap. I wasn't planning on owning a store," says Ann Trammell, a Georgia native who more than a decade ago was a boarding student at Baylor School in Chattanooga, where her Embellish Collection apparel, shoes, and accessories studio occupies a spot in downtown's tony Warehouse Row.

Dressed in the bright colors and bold patterns that mark Embellish's style, Ann Trammell says she was a patron for years and got to know previous owner Terri Holley before venturing into the world in search of a fashion career. Although she moved away, Ann Trammell visited Chattanooga often. On one such trip in 2021, she learned that Terri, after 16 years, was ready to pursue new endeavors but didn't want Embellish to close. After chatting with Terri and asking numerous questions, Ann Trammell bought it.

"It was mid-April and she wanted to close June first. I did not have time to think about it, but I'm glad that it happened that way," says Ann Trammell. "It put together everything I've done for the last few years."

After graduating from the University of Alabama in fashion merchandising, Ann Trammell did a four-year stint in the fashion industry in New York City, working for a broad range of blue-ribbon companies that included Diane von Furstenberg, Oscar de la Renta, and Vince Camuto. But the call of home brought her to Atlanta, where she discovered a new opportunity as a personal stylist, opening her own firm, A.T. Style, in 2019. Then the pandemic hit, putting a screeching halt to social events that had kept her busy. Dealings got so slow at one point, she says, "I wondered: Were people ever going to dress up again?"

While she enjoyed Atlanta, which is about an hour's drive north of her hometown of Griffin, Georgia, Ann Trammell missed the sense of community a burg the size of Chattanooga offers. Her return there allows her to give more personal attention to local affairs and important details, like keeping her customers from duplicating outfits for big occasions.

When Ann Trammell bought Embellish, it had a great following, and she decisively kept intact a talented staff that was popular with clients. While changes weren't necessary for success, she wanted her brand on the company. She sought to set Embellish apart by adding new clothing lines, shoes, and accessories that aren't widely sold elsewhere. Then she focused on building her online business.

Revamping the Embellish website last year expanded the store's reach. Ann Trammell is delighted that she can offer her inventory to clients in Georgia, friends in New York and Alabama, as well as women nationwide who are looking for modern Southern style. "It's interesting to see where people are ordering from online—all over," she says.

Shopping local is the cornerstone for independent retailers, but Ann Trammell also wants others to enjoy the chic modes Embellish offers, from glamorous wear to casual. "I feel like that's where I want to be headed. I want to make it where people in other parts of the country recognize Embellish and make it so it's not just a little boutique in Chattanooga," she says.

For information, visit embellishcollection.com.

PHOTO BY SARAH UNGER

> “I HADN’T BEEN IN CHATTANOOGA FOR A LONG TIME, BUT I CAME BACK. I’D BEEN ALL OVER. IT FEELS LIKE I’VE COME FULL CIRCLE—BEING ABLE TO PUT ALL THIS TOGETHER.”
>
> —ANN TRAMMELL NEWTON, EMBELLISH OWNER

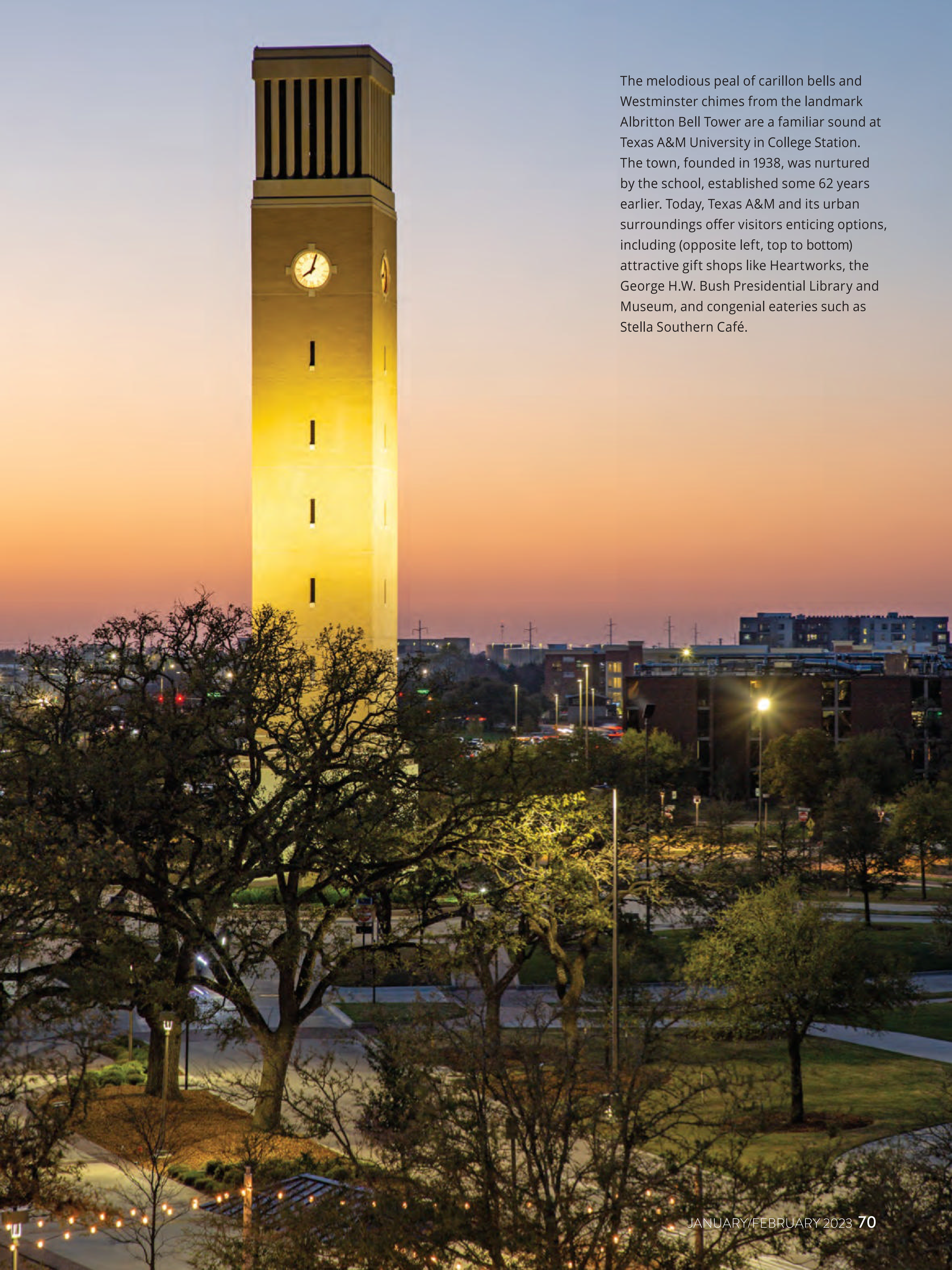
George Bush
Presidential Museum

Southern COLLEGE TOWNS

College Station, Texas

COLLEGE STATION PROUDLY SHOWS ITS SPECTACULAR TEXAS SPIRIT NOT ONLY THROUGH STUDENTS' WHOOPS AND WHISTLES BUT A NETWORK OF THOSE WHO WANT TO LEAVE A LEGACY, INCLUDING A U.S. PRESIDENT.

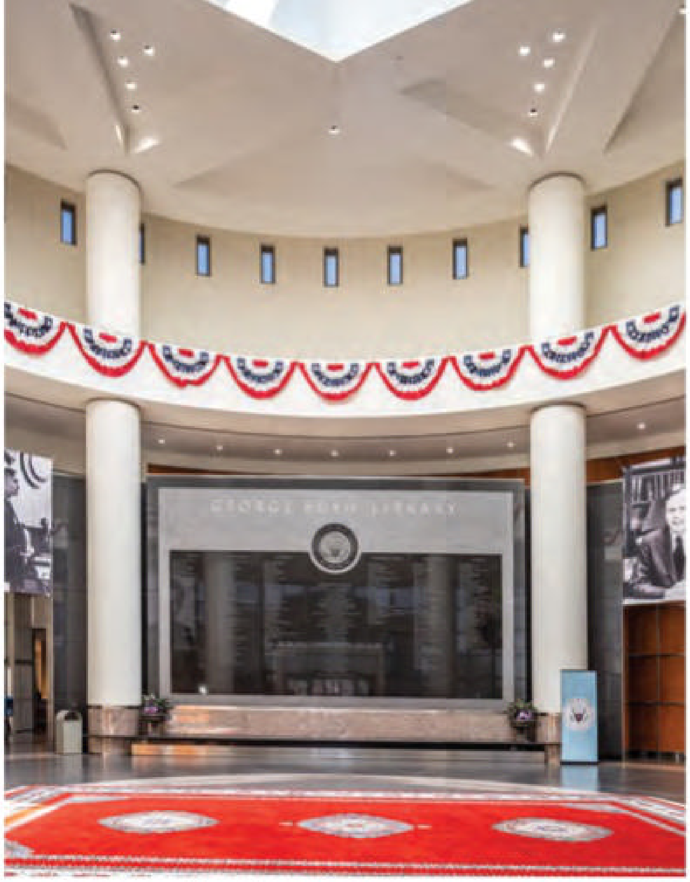
BY **Marie Baxley** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **John O'Hagan**



The melodious peal of carillon bells and Westminster chimes from the landmark Albritton Bell Tower are a familiar sound at Texas A&M University in College Station. The town, founded in 1938, was nurtured by the school, established some 62 years earlier. Today, Texas A&M and its urban surroundings offer visitors enticing options, including (opposite left, top to bottom) attractive gift shops like Heartworks, the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, and congenial eateries such as Stella Southern Café.

Howdy from
AGGIELAND
COLLEGE STATION
@CENTURYS

Those affiliated with Texas A&M are fondly known as Aggies, a moniker that unites the community of one of the country's largest universities. (Clockwise from right) You'll find much to explore in Aggieland, including la Gabriella Coffeeshop & Pastries, which features breads of Guatemala. All-occasion presents top the list at The Gift Box. Boutique hotel The George is popular among travelers and locals alike. Located in Century Square, the property is walking distance to shops and classic restaurants like Porters Dining + Butcher with its American menu. Retired military personnel to new students in the Corps of Cadets garner respect, and a Wall of Honor at the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial pays tribute to soldiers from major wars. (Opposite) The Bush presidential library, highlighting paraphernalia from his life, is a top tourist attraction.



Duty, Honor, Country

From the powerful statue of stallions outside the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum to tiny pollinators that come twice a year, just about everything in College Station is marked by one thing: Aggies. They are the community of Texas A&M University, a school that predates the city and continues to drive its life force.

The Aggie touch is everywhere. Fashionable shops, upscale restaurants, new boutique hotels like The George, and entertainment venues such as the recently opened Aggie Park—all have the stamp of A&M graduates seeking to make a once-sleepy small town a thriving hub in eastern Texas. While President Bush didn't attend the university, it was an Aggie who convinced him and his wife, Barbara, to put their museum there and give the Brazos Valley burg world-renowned recognition. The couple loved it so much, they made the library grounds their final resting place.

The busy campus in the heart of College Station is a beehive of activity, with respected programs in engineering, technology, and agriculture, not to mention a legendary football program at Kyle Field. "There are always people coming in town for something A&M-related," says Shawn Henderson, co-owner of Grass Stains, a women's boutique located in Century Square (an expanding retail and residential development spearheaded by an Aggie).

Shawn and her husband met at A&M, graduated, and moved to Dallas, then Iowa and New Zealand for his medical studies, only to return when it came time to find a job. "I tell everybody I think it's a gem," says Shawn. "It has pretty much

anything a bigger city has, only it's small-town living."

As is true in most collegiate locales, you'll find numerous entertainment arenas like the country-centric Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater, as well as a mecca of casual chain dining establishments to satisfy the hungriest freshman. But more sophisticated palates have a wide range of choices like 1860 Italia, Porters Dining + Butcher, Urban Table, and The Republic, all with an Aggie heritage through the chef or owner. "It's usually people who went to A&M who love College Station so much that they leave their footprint," says Aubrey Nettles, marketing manager for Visit College Station.

The presidential museum, which celebrated its 25th anniversary last fall, put the metropolis on the international map. In the 1990s, Texas oilman Michael Halbouty invited his longtime friend to give a commencement address with an eye toward a future museum. Bush, a Yale University graduate and honored Navy pilot, returned periodically and developed a tremendous respect for the leadership set by the school through its programs and the Corps of Cadets, the largest uniformed body of students outside the country's military academies.

College Station now boasts the Bush School of Government & Public Service, the Museum of the American G.I., and Veterans Park & Athletic Complex, nearly 150 acres that includes a special monument honoring soldiers from our nation's major wars. "The community is like no other. They are very supportive of veterans here," says Amy Raines, a retired Marine who serves as marketing and communications director at the Bush library.

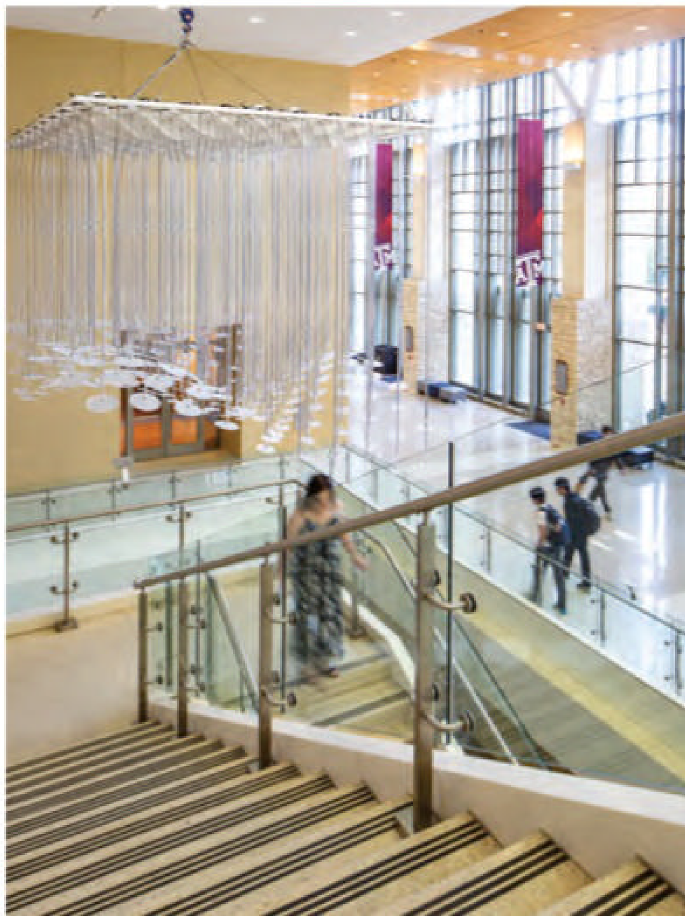
In addition to leadership, the area nurtures the natural world. The Gary Halter Nature Center in Lick Creek Park offers outdoor classrooms, an amphitheater, native plant displays, and a monarch butterfly garden. The bright orange-and-black butterfly even appears on stickers promoting College Station.

Aubrey explains that about a decade ago, the municipality pledged to support the official Texas state insect on its migration in fall and spring by planting and giving away nectar and milkweed plants. Dozens of small gardening groups, and even the stroll-worthy Gardens at Texas A&M University, jumped on board with educational and assistance programs.

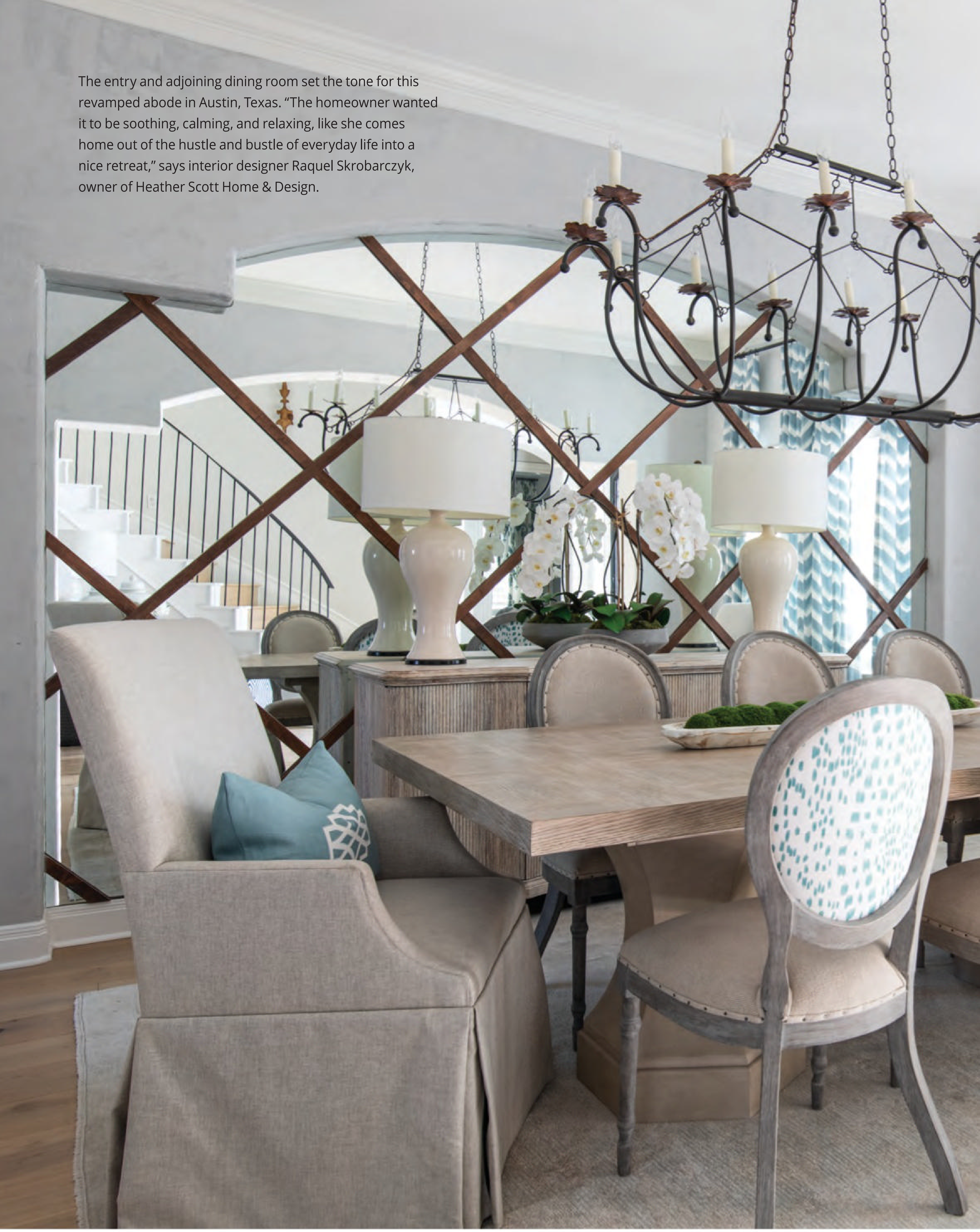
While cordial camaraderie and a close-knit culture make College Station alluring, it's the people who make you stay, says Brigette Hogsed, owner of a local shop, The Gift Box. "They might have lived all over the world, but this is where they come back to," she says. "The people are so friendly. It is refreshing."

grass stains

(Clockwise from above) Serving breakfast, brunch, and lunch, Stella Southern Café will kick-start your day. Follow with a visit to the university, where you'll find Kyle Field, home to the legendary Aggie "12th Man" football tradition. The War Hymn Monument, installed outside the stadium in 2014, honors the fans who traditionally stand throughout a game and link arms for a rousing chorus of the school song. If you're inclined toward the fine arts, stop by the Forsyth Galleries for its glass collections and the J. Wayne Stark Galleries for Texas art. Venture south of campus to enjoy a meal at Urban Table, the latest establishment from die-hard Aggie and local celebrity chef Tai Lee. Shopping enthusiasts will love Grass Stains, where the clothing and accessories are as distinctive as the name.



The entry and adjoining dining room set the tone for this revamped abode in Austin, Texas. "The homeowner wanted it to be soothing, calming, and relaxing, like she comes home out of the hustle and bustle of everyday life into a nice retreat," says interior designer Raquel Skrobarczyk, owner of Heather Scott Home & Design.



SEASIDE OVERTURES

WITH TRANQUIL TONES AND NODS TO THE SEASHORE, A TEXAS DESIGNER REIMAGINES ROOMS TO GRANT A MOTHER AND HER DAUGHTERS AN AT-HOME ESCAPE.

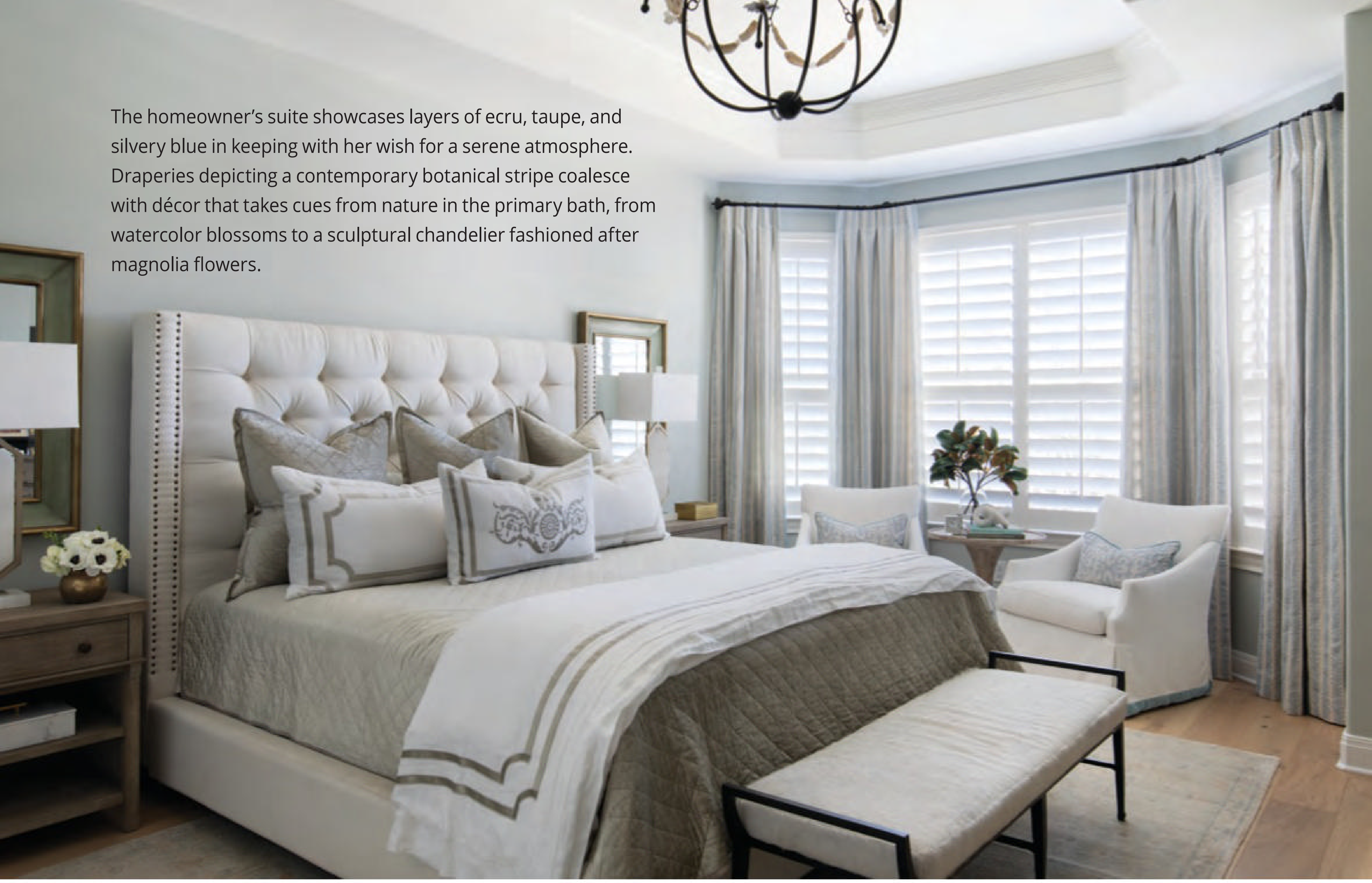
BY **Ashley Shaw** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Avery Nicole Photography**

You won't see white sand or blue water for miles, but stepping inside this Austin remodel, the city's spirited rush and rhythms give way to the serenity typical of a quiet coastal hideaway. "We wanted the homeowner to feel like she was on vacation," says Raquel Skrobarczyk, owner and principal designer at Heather Scott Home & Design.

Over the past decade, Raquel worked with the client, a dentist, to update her dental office as well as her living room. Much of the two-story house, however, remained dark with Tuscan-style details the owner was ready to cast away completely. She tasked Raquel with refreshing the rest of the main level and the upstairs quarters with a calming color palette and subtle seaside influences.

"She loves blue, and she loves the beach," Raquel says of the homeowner, who lives with her two daughters and several four-legged companions. Setting the foundation for an airy, inviting ambience, wide planks of European white oak replaced dark hardwood floors throughout. Cabinetry and walls cloaked in pale blue paint, plus textiles that feature aqua and teal, harmonize with neutral surfaces and furniture.

An elegantly curved staircase lends intrigue to the new foyer, which opens to the formal dining area. Raquel took advantage of an existing niche in the wall behind the buffet to make a distinctive focal point. "We wanted to jazz it up," Raquel says of the plastered wall painted a silvery blue. Pieces of dark-stained wood, affixed to a slightly antiqued mirror, create an oversize trellis effect. Along with the iron chandelier, the design imparts depth and contrasts with the driftwood-hued sideboard, table, and chairs.



The homeowner's suite showcases layers of ecru, taupe, and silvery blue in keeping with her wish for a serene atmosphere. Draperies depicting a contemporary botanical stripe coalesce with décor that takes cues from nature in the primary bath, from watercolor blossoms to a sculptural chandelier fashioned after magnolia flowers.

With a keen eye for tailored details, Raquel gave many classic furnishings chic updates—whether decorative trim on an armchair skirt or playful patterns in unpredictable places. "Changing out the back of a dining chair is a fun touch to add some personality," says Raquel. She chose an animal print for the seating around the breakfast table and a whimsical take on polka dots for the chairbacks in the dining room. "To me, it's important that everything is thoughtfully curated for the client so they feel like they have a one-of-a-kind piece that's special for them," she says.

Custom bed linens and a handcrafted light fixture strung with oyster shells were a must in the primary bedroom. The completely transformed en suite bath features a framed original watercolor and floor-to-ceiling marble. "The bathroom was a hundred-percent brown," Raquel says, noting how their efforts made the space feel bigger and brighter. Pulling a tint from the artwork, she painted the vanity cabinets and topped them with the same sleek white quartz used for the kitchen countertops.

For all her projects, Raquel places special focus on selecting just the right lighting for a given space. "We treat it as the jewelry of the home, essentially. There are so many beautiful shapes and styles; we like them to be kind of unexpected," she says. In the kitchen, gilded mercury glass bell lanterns over the island infuse the cool surrounds with a warm shimmer.

Sophisticated floral motifs, such as a botanical sisal wallpaper and a coconut shell chandelier made to resemble magnolia petals, also reflect the family's style. "It's a house of girls," Raquel says. The designer enjoyed bringing in such feminine flair to complement the refined, restful scheme her client desired not only for herself but also for those she loves. "She wanted it to be a bright and happy place for them to come home to and feel at peace."

Gather for Teatime

Enjoy an afternoon of scones, sweets, and other classic bites with a Southern touch, alongside some of literature's finest selections.

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY **Becca Cummins** AND **Izzie Turner** | FOOD STYLING BY **Katie Moon Dickerson**
STYLING BY **Mary Beth Jones** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **John O'Hagan**

PORTRAIT OF ELMBURY
26
SLIGHTLY FOXED EDITIONS

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WILLIAM FAULKNE

SENTIMENTAL SETTING

Invite dear friends to sit a spell for fellowship, books, and cups of exquisite herbal blends. Accents spanning a palette of dusty rose and teal mingle atop the table, with floral designs skimming across china and ribbons draped elegantly along the center. A captivating arrangement of 'Cappuccino' roses, 'Café au Lait' ranunculus, and butterfly ranunculus stands tall amid stacks of books. Savory bites fill plates with reimagined yet familiar flavors like sherried mushrooms and country ham, while a selection of sweet treats completes the scene.

Country Ham Scones

MAKES 8

2 cups all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
5 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
½ cup diced country ham
1 cup plus 1 teaspoon heavy whipping cream, divided
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 large egg

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, place flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt; pulse until combined. Add cold butter; pulse until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
3. Transfer mixture to a large bowl; fold in ham, 1 cup cream, and pepper, stirring until just combined. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead just until dough comes together. Shape dough into a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Using a 2¼-inch square cutter, cut into 8 squares. Transfer scones to prepared pan.
4. In a small bowl, combine egg and remaining 1 teaspoon cream; whisk until well combined. Brush tops of scones with egg wash.
5. Bake until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Serve warm.

Cucumber and Crab Salad Bites

MAKES 24

1 (8-ounce) container fresh jumbo lump crabmeat, drained and picked
¼ cup thinly sliced green onion
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon sugar
⅛ teaspoon smoked paprika
1 large English cucumber
Garnish: lemon zest, smoked paprika

1. In a medium bowl, stir together crab, green onion, lemon zest and juice, mayonnaise, oil, salt, sugar, and paprika mixing until well combined.
2. Cut cucumber into 24 (½-inch-thick) slices. Using a small spoon or melon baller, scoop three-fourths from center of each slice to create a deep well, leaving about an ⅛-inch-thick wall.
3. Divide crab mixture between cucumber slices (about 2 teaspoons each). Garnish with lemon and paprika, if desired.

Herbed Egg and Watercress Tea Sandwiches

MAKES 12

6 hard-cooked eggs, peeled and chopped
1 cup coarsely chopped fresh watercress
1 tablespoon sliced fresh chives
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard
1 teaspoon white vinegar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
6 slices white bread

1. In a medium bowl, gently stir together eggs, watercress, chives, and tarragon. Add mayonnaise, mustard, vinegar, and salt, stirring until combined.
2. Spread a thick, even layer of egg mixture onto 3 slices of bread. Top each with remaining bread slices to make 3 sandwiches.
3. Using a serrated knife, trim and discard crusts from each sandwich to create a 3-inch square. Cut each sandwich diagonally into 4 equal triangles.
4. Serve immediately, or cover with damp paper towels, place in airtight container, and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Sherried Mushroom Puffs

MAKES 8

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1½ teaspoons olive oil
1 tablespoon minced shallot
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 (8-ounce) container fresh baby portobello mushrooms, cleaned and finely chopped
1½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
2 tablespoons sherry
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 pinch ground red pepper
½ cup heavy whipping cream
4 large eggs, beaten
8 frozen puff pastry shells
Crème fraîche, for serving
Garnish: fresh thyme leaves

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large sauté pan, heat butter and olive oil over medium-high heat. Add shallot and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent and aromatic, about 1 minute. Add mushrooms and thyme; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 5 to 7 minutes. Add sherry, Worcestershire, salt, black pepper, and red pepper, stirring until incorporated. Cook, stirring occasionally, until all liquid has evaporated and pan is dry,

2 to 4 minutes. Add cream; cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Let cool to room temperature. Whisk in eggs. Place puff pastry shells on prepared pan 1½ inches apart.

3. Bake until lightly golden and puffed, about 10 to 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°. Bake until puff pastry is fully cooked, 10 to 15 minutes more. Remove from oven and let cool 5 minutes. Gently press down center of puff pastry to create a well.
4. Spoon about 3 tablespoons cooled mushroom mixture into each pastry shell.
5. Bake until golden brown and center is set, 15 to 18 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes before serving. Serve with crème fraîche. Garnish with thyme, if desired.

Iced Almond Sugar Cookies

MAKES ABOUT 36

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups confectioners' sugar
1 large egg, room temperature
2 teaspoons almond extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Royal Icing (recipe follows)
3 to 4 teaspoons water
Dried rose petals
Gold highlighter dust
½ teaspoon vodka or other clear liquor

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and confectioners' sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and extract, beating until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough forms. Divide dough in half.
4. On a heavily floured surface, roll half of dough ¼ inch thick. Using a 2½-inch round fluted cookie cutter, cut dough, and place on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining dough, rerolling scraps as necessary.
5. Bake until tops are dry, and edges are very lightly golden brown for 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 2 minutes. Remove from pans and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Line a rimmed sheet pan with parchment paper.
7. In a large bowl, pour Royal Icing. Cover royal icing with damp paper towel or kitchen towel to keep from drying out. Add water, 1 teaspoon at a time, until smooth ribbons fall from spatula, and will settle back down into icing after 10 seconds. Dip tops of each cookie into royal icing, allowing excess to drip off. Place cookies on prepared sheet pan and sprinkle tops with dried rose petals. Let dry completely, 2 to 3 hours.
8. In a small bowl, combine highlighter dust and vodka. Using a small paint brush, flick speckles of highlighter mixture onto dried cookies. Let dry completely, 5 to 10 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

ROYAL ICING

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

1¾ cups confectioners' sugar
1½ tablespoons meringue powder
2 tablespoons water
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
⅛ teaspoon almond extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat confectioners' sugar and meringue powder at low speed until combined. Slowly add 2 tablespoons water and extracts. Increase speed to medium, and beat until stiff peaks form, about 3 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Salted Caramel Tassies

MAKES 24

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened and divided
⅓ cup plus 2 teaspoons cream cheese, softened

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1¼ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
½ cup heavy whipping cream
¼ cup water
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Garnish: sea salt flakes

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat ½ cup butter and cream cheese at medium speed until smooth. Reduce mixer speed to low. Gradually add flour and ½ teaspoon salt, beating until combined. Shape dough into a disk and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
2. Spray a 24-cup mini muffin pan with baking spray with flour.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to 3⁄16-inch thickness. Using a 2¾-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as needed. Place 1 round in each prepared muffin cup, pressing into bottom and up sides. Prick dough with a fork. Freeze until firm, about 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°.
5. Bake until bottom is dry and edges are lightly golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. (If the centers of crusts have puffed out slightly, while still warm, use bottom of a wooden spoon or a wooden dowel dipped in flour to gently press centers down to create space for caramel filling.) Let cool slightly in pan, about 10 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool completely on a wire rack.
6. In a small saucepan, bring cream and remaining 2 tablespoons butter to a simmer over medium-high heat. Cover; turn off heat.
7. In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, bring ¼ cup water, corn syrup, and sugar to a boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Cook until a candy thermometer registers 350°. Remove from heat; gradually add cream mixture, gently stirring until combined. Stir in vanilla and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Let cool for 5 minutes.
8. Fill centers of cooled crusts with caramel. Let cool until caramel is set, at least 1 hour or overnight. Just before serving, garnish with sea salt, if desired.

Orange Buttermilk Bars

MAKES 16 (2½-INCH) BARS

½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1¼ cups sugar, divided
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
3 large eggs, room temperature
2 teaspoons orange zest
½ cup fresh orange juice
¾ cup buttermilk, room temperature

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 9-inch square baking pan with aluminum foil.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and ¼ cup sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together 1 cup flour and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Gather dough into a ball and flatten into a disk. Transfer to prepared pan, pressing into bottom.
4. Bake until lightly browned, about 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside.
5. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, orange zest and juice, buttermilk, and remaining 1 cup sugar. Add remaining 3 tablespoons flour, whisking to combine. Pour filling onto prepared crust.
6. Bake until set, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Using a sharp knife, trim edges, and cut into 2½-inch diamonds, discarding scraps as needed. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

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SMALL-TOWN SPIRIT

BLOSSOMING OUT OF ATLANTA'S CULTURAL GROWTH FOLLOWING THE 1996 SUMMER OLYMPICS, THE NEARBY CITY OF DECATUR LEAVES ITS OWN CREATIVE MARK ON THE REGION. BY **Kate Lorio** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Steve Rizzo**

Decatur's Historic DeKalb Courthouse is home to the DeKalb History Center and a special bicentennial exhibit on display for the year. (Opposite) In the square that surrounds the building, you will find independent businesses like playful gift retailer Sq/Ft (top) and Leon's Full Service (bottom), an eatery located in a renovated 1920s service station. Art installations throughout the city add to its characteristic charm.

DEKALB COVNTY COVRT HOVSE

Wandering down the shady sidewalks of Decatur, Georgia, it would be easy to forget for a moment that you're in the center of a bustling metropolis. "When there's so many people out and just walking around the square, it's such a charming little area. You feel like you're in a small sort of town, but you're really not," says Marissa Howard, programs and membership coordinator for the DeKalb History Center.

The heart of Decatur's shopping, eating, and entertainment, East Court Square—anchored by the Historic DeKalb Courthouse—hosts more than 50 small businesses surrounding a picturesque grassy knoll. Explore the stretch by foot in between attending a picnic, live show, or dance lesson on the lawn. Venture into Sq/Ft for a quirky selection of home goods with a sense of humor, Boutique Karma for boho garb, or Squash Blossom for modern apparel and wares fashioned by local crafters.

At the corner of the square, beloved bookstore Little Shop of Stories caters to a wide spectrum of readers, especially younger ones, in a fantastical setting. "Being a magical space was really the goal," says store manager Justin Colussy-Estes. Drawings gifted to the store by illustrators span the sky-high walls and accent whimsical architectural details, like a Harry Potter secret passageway leading to a *Goodnight Moon* room. Host to dozens of author visits and signings all year, Little Shop shines brightly during the annual Decatur Book Festival—one of the largest literary celebrations in the country—which invites writers, poets, and word enthusiasts to congregate for lectures and conversation.

Nearby, long cherished Café Alsace has witnessed Decatur's rapid growth

(Above) Café Alsace, a neighborhood restaurant established by a native of the eponymous region, serves up classic French cooking and delicate desserts (below, right) amid a welcoming ambience. (Below, left) Decatur enjoys a bevy of resident-owned shopping sites like Vivid Boutique, which specializes in heirloom-quality jewelry. (Opposite) Known for its oyster selection and craft cocktails, Kimball House (bottom left and center) exudes an elegant atmosphere steeped in the past. Nearby community mainstay Little Shop of Stories (top left and right) is packed with imaginative details, especially for younger visitors, offering a curated selection of national bestsellers and locally penned works.

the
WHITE BULL
123

FOLK ART
SAVI PROVISIONS

(Above) In touch with the spirited vibe of Decatur, Sq/Ft is a women-owned shop purveying everything from luxury candles to witty socks. (Left, bottom to top) FolkArt is a must-stop for breakfast, with highly praised renditions of Southern favorites like fried green tomatoes and whiskey-peach compote chicken and waffles. In the evening, indulge in a hearty Italian meal at The White Bull, with its farm-fresh menu incorporating local seasonal ingredients in every dish.

for the last 20 years. Owner Benedicte Ulsas Cooper's European-style sidewalk establishment mingles the elegance of traditional French cuisine with the hospitality of a Southern setting. Treat yourself to Cotelette de Porc and finish with Mousse au Chocolat for dessert. If you're craving a frozen treat, head across the way to ice cream parlor Butter & Cream for their specialty sundaes.

Meandering from the square into tree-lined streets, visitors can take advantage of Decatur's ranking as the most walkable locale in Georgia. "On many weekends, we barely touch our cars as we walk to restaurants or uptown to the shops," says longtime resident Ross Burris. Stroll south to see the Decatur Artway, a collection of rotating and permanent outdoor sculptures. Wall murals lend color to small businesses, while local artists' miniature "fairy doors" scattered around town create an imaginative treasure hunt. For further immersion in nature, trek to Woodlands Garden, a 7-acre urban oasis offering "tyke hikes," jaunts that cater to parents and grandparents with small children.

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The IBERIAN PIG
JAMÓN IBÉRICO
TAPAS
SANGRIA CASERA

(Above) Grab a sidewalk table and experience Jamón Happy Hour at The Iberian Pig, which features specials on meat-and-cheese boards in the evening Monday through Friday. (Left, top to bottom) If you're still famished, order a variety of tapas imbued with Latin flavor. For more casual dining and bites to-go, Kelly's Market in the Old Depot District crafts delectable deli sandwiches. Ask for the Desilu, a signature Reuben named for the original store's location near the studio in 1960s Los Angeles.

more than 80 restaurants. Start your day early with a latte and a bagel at B-Side coffee shop on the square. After a morning of boutique hopping, stop by family-owned Kelly's Market and choose a snack from their ice cream bar to top off your lunch. Supper selections include The Iberian Pig, where you can indulge in a Spanish tapas meal with a charcuterie spread. If you're craving Italian, The White Bull offers contemporary spins on favorites like rigatoni and porchetta.

After sundown, locals often congregate at The Marlay House, a traditional Old-World venue bedecked in ornate woodwork. "It's owned by an Irish family, and they do a wonderful job of making a space that is welcoming to everyone with classic and delicious pub food and live music," Ross says, noting that his children love coming along to The Marlay House for a family outing.

Decatur celebrates its bicentennial this year, a fitting marker for a place experiencing its second resurgence since the Atlanta Olympics. Like so many close-knit communities, the area struggled with pandemic closures, but it's coming to life again with revived ardor. There's never been a better time to venture past Atlanta proper and let the hometown vibes of Decatur take you in. "It's a really great eating place, and festivals are coming back," Justin says. "It's a whole renewal happening."

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From February 20 through February 26, 2023, the Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival will bring together the South's finest chefs, restaurants, mixologists, winemakers, artists, and farmers in celebration of Lowcountry culture. The festival benefits the David M. Carmines Memorial Foundation, a nonprofit organization that has raised more than $1 million for charities in South Carolina.

This year's event is set to be the best ever with appearances from culinary hotshots like TV's Brother Luck and Nini Nguyen, Ricky Moore of Salt Box, Derick Wade of The Darling, and more. It'll be a Lowcountry foodie's wonderland with events like a Thursday dinner, master classes, traditional Pig Pickin' + Oyster Roast, and the anticipated Saturday festival.

To get your tickets, visit *hiltonheadseafoodfestival.com*.

2023 FESTIVAL MUSTS

HILTON HEAD ISLAND
SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

ZERO FORKS GIVEN
Dine with the tide on Thursday night with 100 of your new best friends. On an oceanside courtyard, savor a sustainably caught seafood menu inspired by global flavors prepared by a celebrity guest chef.

PIG PICKIN' + OYSTER ROAST
Set beneath a canopy of Spanish moss, the Pig Pickin' + Oyster Roast is a spectacular Lowcountry evening immersion experience of top-notch barbecue bites, tasty oysters, and an impressive lineup of artisans and makers.

SECRETS OF A PITMASTER
This year's master class demonstration will be a peek into a pitmaster's techniques and tricks of the trade. From charcoal to open-fire cooking, it'll be a sizzling good time with plenty of samples and sips along the way.

ANNUAL SEAFOOD FESTIVAL
Wrap up the week with the 16th Annual Saturday Seafood Festival, where good eats, sips, and live entertainment are never hard to come by. Cooking demos, tastings, and harbor views are the best way to bid the festival farewell, until next year!

HILTON HEAD ISLAND
SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

@hhiseafoodfest

Enjoy life. It's delicious.
HILTON HEAD ISLAND
SEAFOOD FESTIVAL
FEBRUARY 20 - 26, 2023
HILTONHEADSEAFOODFESTIVAL.COM

Coffee Pairings

Ease into a relaxing interlude with your favorite cup of java and a comforting homemade treat, from soft cinnamon swirls to crisp chocolate biscotti.

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY **Becca Cummins** | FOOD STYLING BY **Katie Moon Dickerson** | STYLING BY **Mary Beth Jones** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **John O'Hagan**

Banana-Cinnamon Swirl Rolls

MAKES 12

2 cups all-purpose flour, divided
1⅔ cups stone-ground whole wheat flour
1 (0.25-ounce) package instant yeast
1 tablespoon plus ¼ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
¾ cup hot water (120° to 130°)
½ cup mashed ripe banana
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
¼ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine 1 cup all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, yeast, and 1 tablespoon salt. Add ¾ cup hot water, banana, honey, and melted butter; beat at low speed until dough comes together. Cover and let rest for 15 minutes.
2. Add ½ cup all-purpose flour to wheat flour mixture. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at low speed until dough is smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky, 6 to 8 minutes. Add up to remaining ½ cup flour, 1 tablespoon at a time, if dough is too sticky. Lightly spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Shape dough into a smooth ball and place in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, 30 to 45 minutes.
3. Spray a 12-well muffin pan with cooking spray. Place on a rimmed baking sheet.
4. In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, cinnamon, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt.
5. Punch down dough and let rest for 10 to 15 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 18x12-inch rectangle. Using a small offset spatula, spread room temperature butter on dough. Sprinkle with cinnamon-sugar mixture, leaving a ½-inch border on one long side. Starting at long side opposite border, roll up dough, jelly roll style. Place seam side down and shape into an 18-inch-long log with even thickness. Using a serrated knife dipped in flour, cut dough into 12 (1½-inch-thick) slices. Tuck ends underneath and gently pinch together bottoms. Place in prepared muffin cups. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until puffed, 15 to 20 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 350°.
7. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 200° to 205°, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool in pan for 3 minutes. Remove from pan. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Serve warm.

Lemon-Rosemary Loaf

MAKES 1 (9X5-INCH) LOAF

¾ cup sugar
½ cup unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled
1 cup sour cream, room temperature
2 large eggs, room temperature
1 tablespoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons fresh rosemary, finely chopped
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon kosher salt
Sweetened whipped cream, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 9x5-inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar and melted butter. Whisk in sour cream, eggs, lemon zest, and vanilla. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, rosemary, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture, whisking just until combined. Spoon batter into prepared pan and

spread evenly with an offset spatula. Tap pan firmly on counter a few times to remove any air bubbles.

3. Bake until top is dry and golden brown, 45 to 50 minutes. Cover with foil and bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 10 to 15 minutes more. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Serve at room temperature with sweetened whipped cream.

Triple-Berry Scones with Vanilla Bean Glaze

MAKES 8

2 cups plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, divided
¼ cup sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
1 cup frozen mixed berries (blueberry, strawberry, and raspberry)
¾ cup cold heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
Vanilla Bean Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together 2 cups flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using a pastry blender or 2 forks, cut in cold butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

3. In a small bowl, toss together frozen berries and remaining 1 tablespoon flour until coated.

4. In another small bowl, stir together cold cream and vanilla. Gradually add cream mixture to flour mixture, stirring with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened. Working gently, bring mixture together with hands until a dough forms.

5. On a lightly floured surface, turn out dough and knead gently until smooth by patting dough and folding it in half 4 to 5 times. Using a rolling pin, roll dough to a ½-inch thickness. Scatter ½ cup frozen berries over half of dough. Fold other half of dough over berries to enclose them. Lightly roll dough to a ¾-inch thickness. Repeat scattering, folding, and rolling process with remaining ½ cup berries. Roll or pat dough into a 7-inch circle about 1 inch thick, pressing together any cracks that form, if necessary. Using a bench scraper or sharp knife, cut circle into 8 wedges. Place wedges at least 2 inches apart on prepared pan. Freeze until firm, about 1 hour.

6. Preheat oven to 350°.

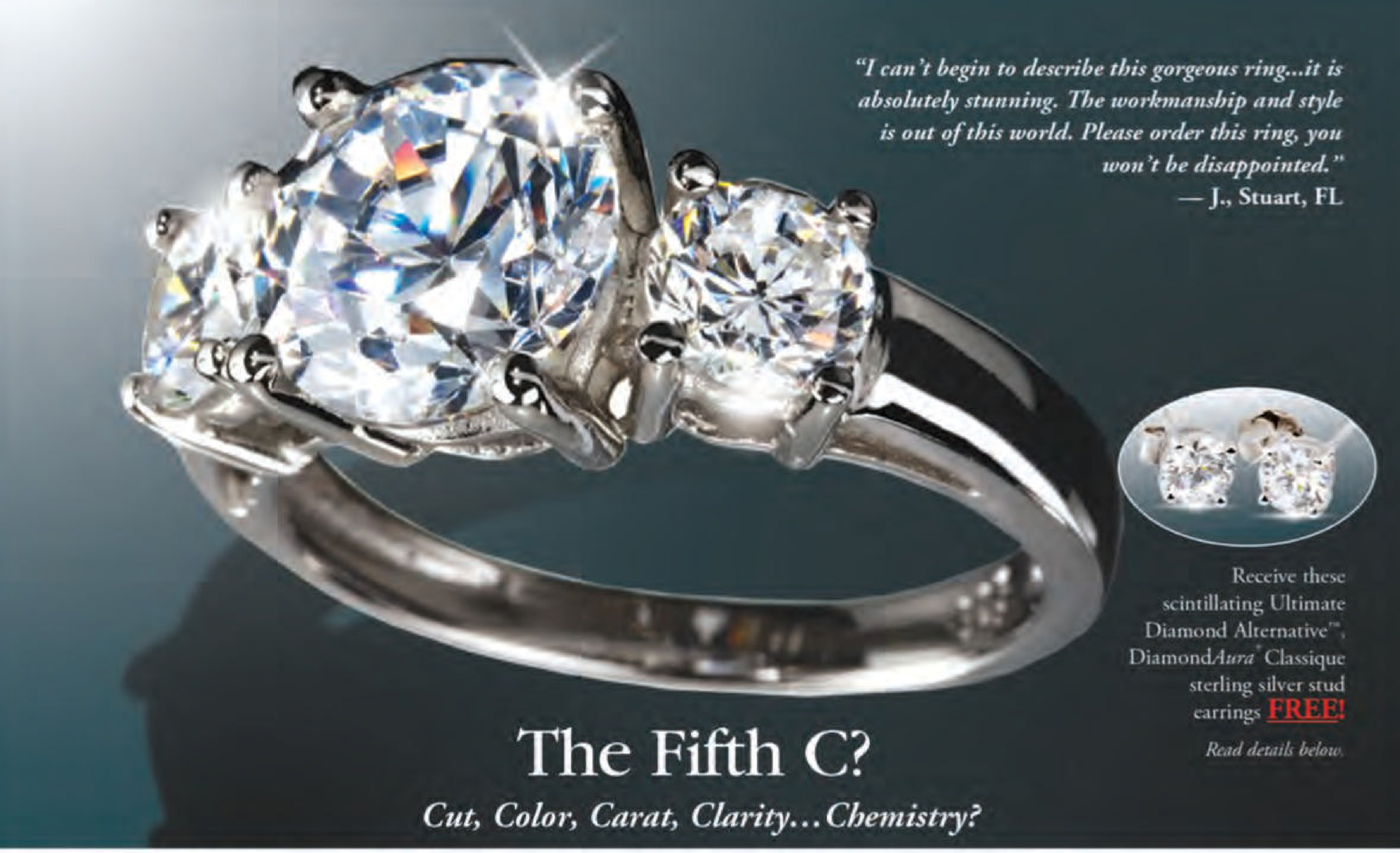
7. Bake until lightly golden and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Drizzle scones with Vanilla Bean Glaze.

VANILLA BEAN GLAZE

MAKES ABOUT ⅓ CUP

⅔ cup confectioners' sugar
3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon vanilla bean paste
¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients until smooth and well combined. Use immediately.



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Color	"D" Colorless	**"D" Colorless**
Clarity	"IF"	**Clear**
Dispersion/Fire	0.044	**0.066**
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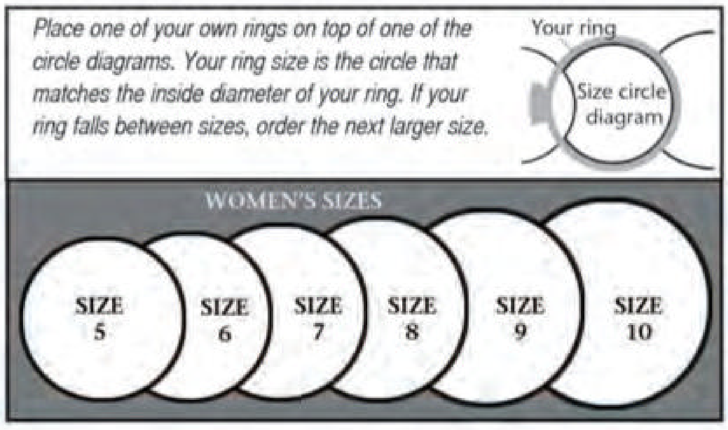

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Chocolate, Peanut Butter, and Pistachio Biscotti

MAKES ABOUT 36

6 ounces semisweet chocolate, finely chopped and divided
½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1¾ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup Dutch-process cocoa powder, sifted
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon instant espresso powder
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
½ cup peanut butter chips
½ cup roasted pistachios, roughly chopped

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the top of a double boiler, place 4 ounces chopped chocolate. Cook over simmering water, stirring frequently, until melted and smooth. Remove from heat; set aside.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs and vanilla; beat until well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add melted chocolate, beating until well combined.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, espresso powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Fold in peanut butter chips, pistachios, and remaining 2 ounces chopped chocolate.
5. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface and divide in half. Shape each half into a 9x3-inch loaf, and place 2 to 2½ inches apart on prepared pan.
6. Bake until set and loaves spring back when touched, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool on pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 300°.
7. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
8. Place 1 cooled loaf on a cutting board. Using a serrated knife, cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices. Gently place, cut side down, ½ to ¾ inch apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining loaf.
9. Bake, one batch at a time if needed, until cut sides feel toasted and mostly dry, about 25 minutes, turning slices halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 2 minutes. Carefully remove from pan and let cool completely on wire racks. (Biscotti will continue to crisp as they cool.) Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

MORE TO SAVOR

Find the recipe for our delicious Raspberry and Pistachio Financiers at southernladymagazine.com.

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RESOURCES

COVER

See Gather for Teatime.

TWINING VINE

Page 31: Julian fabric in brown; Anna French. Bordallo Pinheiro Woods Hunting dinner plates; Bromberg's.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

Pages 33–34: Bernardaud Soleil Levant dinner plate; Bloomingdale's. Raynaud Allee Royale salad plate and breakfast cup-and-saucer, Oneida Silver Golden Royal Flute in stainless with gold accent, 5-piece place setting; Replacements, Ltd. Royal Limoges La Bocca Green dessert plate; Scully & Scully. Optical Gold Stem water glass in gold; Vietri. Beatrice Forest Green place mats; Mrs. Alice. Bowood dinner napkins; Courtland & Co. Sage Bows tablecloth; Julia Amory. **Page 35:** Bernardaud Constance salad plate and Oneida Silver Golden Enchantment 5-piece place setting; Replacements, Ltd. Anna Weatherley Anna's Palette charger in antique white; Neiman Marcus. Dascoli Flamenco embroidered napkin and Nason Moretti Ruby Twisted wineglass; CB Lifestyle by Carolyn Bender. Deco Twist Napkin Jewels in gold; L'Objet. Essential tablecloth in white quilted; Ballard Designs.

DIVINE DUET

Pages 41–44: Faiencerie de Gien Tulipes Noires dinner and salad/dessert plates, Lunt Silver Modern Victorian sterling 4-piece place setting; Replacements, Ltd. Finezza Grey charger; Arte Italica. Gradient Stripe table runner in black; Bodrum Linens. Avery dinner napkin in petal pink; The Pink House Design.

SEASIDE OVERTURES

Pages 75–80: Interiors; Raquel Skrobarczyk of Heather Scott Home & Design. **Pages 75–76:** Chandelier; Lowcountry Originals. Dining chair backs; Les Touches in aqua by Brunschwig & Fils. Drapery fabric in bedroom; Chevron Silk by Brunschwig & Fils. **Pages 77–78:** Backsplash; Hive by Ann Sacks. Lorford Smoke Bell Lantern pendant lights; Visual Comfort. Eternal Statuario quartz countertops; Silestone. Island paint color; Brewster Gray (HC-162) by Benjamin Moore. Drapery fabric; Raja Embroidery by Schumacher. Accent pillow fabric; Thibaut. Bathroom wallpaper; Chrysanthemum Sisal in sky by Schumacher. **Pages 79–80:** Bedroom wall paint color; Silver Satin (OC-26) by Benjamin Moore. Chandelier in bedroom; Lowcountry Originals. Drapery fabric in bedroom; Woodperry in blue by Schumacher. Vanity cabinet paint color; Sterling (1591) by Benjamin Moore.

GATHER FOR TEATIME

Pages 81–84: Minton Ancestral (Globe Backstamp) salad plate, teacup & saucer, and teapot & lid; Ceralene Laurier Blue dinner plate and creamer; Wallace Silver Rose Point 5-piece place setting; and Fostoria American Clear water goblet; Replacements, Ltd. Cotton Buffet napkin in faded rose; World Market.

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PHOTO BY KIMBERLY DAVIS

Cherish the Small Things

BY **Phyllis Hoffman DePiano**

In my sewing room sits my grandmother's treadle sewing machine, of which I was the lucky recipient when she passed. I often think about the hours of sewing she did on that machine, and I am in awe of her talent and determination to create. As a child, I would stand by her as she moved her feet on the treadle and sewed seams. It took great practice, but her stitches were perfect.

The machine still works and has all the parts. I found the bill of sale along with the delivery papers, and it really humbled me. Her sewing machine was delivered to their Albertville, Alabama, farm by horse and buggy—there was even a charge for a bale of hay for the horse. I can only imagine her excitement. She and Granddad had three boys, my dad being the oldest, and she made all their clothes and quilts for the cold winter nights in their house. This purchase was a great sacrifice, I am sure.

After garments were deemed worn out, they went to the quilt pile, where she collected bits and pieces for her creations. She made her own quilt batting from the cotton they grew and picked, combing it to prepare it for use.

Fabric was scarce, and stores were far away. But in those cold, wintry months, she sewed for her family with whatever she had.

As we face the winter days to come, it's the perfect time to be creative and learn a new hobby or renew our determination to finish projects we have started. My goal is to appreciate what we have and use our precious gifts. After thinking about the challenges of generations before us, I realize all over again that we are blessed with so many things to treasure. Taking these for granted has been so easy, but my renewed spirit of living with gratitude will help me cherish the small things.

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